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Website: salarnews.in | www.magzter.com | 11 AUGUST 2024 | SUNDAY | BENGALURU | 5 SAFAR, 1446 AH | Vol 4 | Issue No 199 | Pages: 8

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B'desh Chief Justice quits amid students' ultimatum

Students had asked the Hasina loyalist to resign by 1 pm

DHAKA, 10 AUG

Bangladesh's Chief Justice Obaidul Hassan and five other judges of the apex Appellate Division on Saturday tendered their resignation, five days after the fall of Sheikh Hasina's regime amid massive street protests and students marching towards the apex court demanding a revamp of the judiciary.

The 65-year-old top judge revealed his decision around 1pm after protesters of the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement gathered at the apex court premises.

The students had issued an ultimatum to him and the judges of the Appellate Division to resign by 1 pm

The students' ultimatum sought the ouster of chief justice and other judges "loyal to (Hasina's) Awami League".

Law adviser, equivalent to the minister of the newly-installed interim government, Prof Asif Nazrul said that the resignation letter would be sent to President Mohammad Shahabuddin "without delay for taking necessary measures" and he was expecting the process to be completed very soon. "We have received only the resignation letter of the chief justice. There is no update about (resignation) of others," Nazrul added.

Earlier, the full court meeting of the Supreme Court got cancelled as students issued a two-hour ultimatum for the resignation of the chief justice and other justices of the apex Appellate Division of the Supreme Court of unitary Bangladesh. In the face of student protest, Chief Justice Hassan postponed the meeting and later said that he would step down.

Bangladesh Army personnel were deployed at the Supreme Court premises as hundreds of protesting students gathered.

Chief Justice Hassan told journalists at the apex court premises that he has decided to resign considering the safety of the judges of the Supreme Court, High Court and lower courts across the country amid the emerging situation, The Daily Star newspaper reported. Following the ouster of Prime Minister Hasina, who resigned and fled to India on Monday following the political turmoil in Bangladesh, 84-year-old Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus was sworn in on Thursday as the head of an interim government.

His government is expected to announce fresh elections after bringing the law-and-order situation under control following the deadly anti-government demonstrations against the Hasina government that had led to massive violence, which is now abating. *—PTI*

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Army was deployed near Supreme Court as hundreds of protesting students gathered; Inset: Chief Justice Obaidul Hassan ***PHOTO: PTI***

PHOTO: PTI

Israeli strike on Gaza school shelter kills more than 100

DEIR AL-BALAH, 10 AUG

More than 100 Palestinians have been killed and dozens wounded in an Israeli strike on a school sheltering displaced people in Gaza City, according to Palestinian officials. Three Israeli bombs hit the al-Tabin school, located in Daraj district, Gaza's civil defence agency said of the attack on Saturday which it described as a "horrific massacre". The Israeli military acknowledged the strike, claiming it hit a Hamas command centre within the school. Women, children and the elderly are reported to be among the dead and the toll was expected to rise. The attack took place while people were performing morning prayers and triggered a fire that ripped through the building. Israeli forces have repeatedly attacked schools used as shelters, claiming they are command centres for Hamas to hide fighters and manufacture weapons.

—Courtesy, Al-Jazeera

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PM IN WAYANAD

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inspects the landslide-affected areas, in Wayanad district, on Saturday ***PHOTO: PTI***

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SEARCH ON

2 jawans killed in gunfight with terrorists in J&K

The encounter between security forces and terrorists broke out at Ahlan Gagarmandu area of Anantnag ***PHOTO: PTI***

SRINAGAR, 10 AUG

Two Army personnel were killed and three others injured in a fierce gunfight with terrorists at a forest in a remote area in Jammu and Kashmir's Anantnag district on Saturday, officials said.

The incident occurred at Ahlan Gagarmandu forest in the Kokernag area of the south Kashmir district during a cordon and search operation that was launched following information about the presence of terrorists there, they said.

The terrorists hiding in the forest opened indiscriminate fire upon noticing the search parties, leading to an intense gun battle, officials said.

Five army personnel were injured in the firing by the terrorists, they said, adding the injured were immediately taken to a hospital, where two of them died.

Reinforcements have been rushed to the area, and an operation to track down and neutralize the terrorists was going on when last reports were received, the officials said. The Army's Srinagar-based Chinar Corps, in a post on X, said, "Based on specific intelligence input, a joint operation was launched by the Indian Army, @JmuKmrPolice & @crpf_srinagar today in general area Kokernag, Anantnag. Contact was established and a firefight ensued." "Two personnel have been injured and evacuated from the area," it said. *—PTI*

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RUSSIA DENIES RECRUITING INDIANS FOR WAR

NEW DELHI, 10 AUG

The Russian Embassy in India on Saturday denied that Russia had engaged in any "public or obscure campaigns" in "fraudulent schemes" to recruit Indian citizens for military service in the country.

The Russian Embassy in Delhi in a statement said, "Since April this year, the Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation has stopped the admission of citizens of a number of foreign countries, including India, to military service in the Russian Armed Forces." The Russian Embassy in India also condoled the deaths of Indian nationals while serving in the Russian Army in the war against Ukraine. The Russian mission said it has received multiple requests from the media to comment on the issue. Notably, several Indians were allegedly duped into fighting in Russia's war with Ukraine on the pretext of lucrative jobs. In July, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, during his meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin in Moscow, took a strong stance on the issue of Indian nationals being recruited into the Russian Army. *—ANI*

India to introduce UPI service in Maldives

MALE, 10 AUG

India and Maldives have signed an agreement to introduce the Unified Payments Interface in the archipelago nation, which will have a "very positive" impact on its tourism sector, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar has said.

The Memorandum of Understanding was signed on Friday during Jaishankar's three-day official visit to the Maldives.

Developed by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), Unified Payment Interface (UPI) is an instant real-time payment system to facilitate inter-bank transactions through mobile phones.

Addressing a press conference with his Maldivian counterpart Moosa Zameer after their "productive discussions", Jaishankar said that India, through its UPI, has "revolutionised digital transactions".

Stressing that it has taken financial inclusion in India to new levels, he said "Today 40 per cent of the world's real-time digital payments take place in our country."

"We see this revolution, every day in our lives. I am pleased to note that with the signing of the MoU today, we have taken the first step towards bringing this digital innovation to Maldives," he said.

Tourism is the main source of economic activity for the Maldives, contributing nearly 30 per cent of the GDP and generating more than 60 per cent of foreign exchange.

Jaishankar's visit aims to reset the bilateral relationship with the Maldives and is the first high-level trip from India after the archipelago nation's pro-China president, Mohamed Muizzu, assumed office last year. *—PTI*

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GADKARI WRITES TO PUNJAB CM OVER ALLEGED ATTACKS ON NHAI ENGINEERS

CHANDIGARH, 10 AUG

Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways, Nitin Gadkari, on Saturday wrote a letter to Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann over alleged attacks on engineers and contractors in Jalandhar and Ludhiana.

Gadkari wrote in his letter, "I have been informed about two untoward incidents that occurred recently on the Delhi-Katra expressway projects. In one incident in Jalandhar District, the Engineer of the Contractor was brutally assaulted. Although FIR has been registered in this regard, strong action is required to be taken against the perpetrators. In another incident in Ludhiana District, the Project camp of the Contractor of the Delhi-Katra Expressway was attacked by miscreants who also threatened the Engineers to burn the project camp and their staff alive. However, an FIR has still not been filed and the miscreants have not been arrested despite written requests by NHAI officers." *—ANI*

VERDICT NOW ON 13 AUG

Suspense over Vinesh Phogat's appeal for Silver continues

PARIS, 10 AUG

The ad-hoc division of the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) will take another day before deciding on Indian wrestler Vinesh Phogat's appeal against her disqualification from the women's 50kg free-style final of the Olympic Games.

The 29-year-old was disqualified for being 100g overweight at the time on weigh-in on Wednesday. The much-anticipated verdict on her appeal was earlier due to be announced this evening.

According to an IOA source, the decision is likely to be made public only on 13 August, two days after the conclusion of the Games in Paris.

The ad-hoc division is set up especially for dispute resolution during the Olympics.

After the hearing, the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) had insisted that it was hopeful of a "positive resolution".

In the summit clash, Vinesh was replaced by Cuban wrestler Yusneylis Guzman Lopez, who lost to her in the semifinals on Tuesday.

In her appeal, the Indian has demanded that she be given a joint silver with Lopez as she was within the prescribed weight limit during her bouts on Tuesday.

Vinesh was represented by high-profile senior advocates Harish Salve and Vidushpat Singhania. *—PTI*

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In the summit clash, Vinesh Phogat was replaced by Cuban wrestler Yusneylis Guzman Lopez ***PHOTO: PTI***

What to expect at the Olympics Closing Ceremony?

After more than two weeks of action-packed sport, Paris is preparing for the 2024 Olympics closing ceremony. It will take place on Sunday, at the Stade de France.

The closing ceremony includes:

- Parade of athletes
- Thanking of the 45,000 volunteers
- Medal ceremony
- The extinguishing of the Olympic flame
- The proclamation of the end of the Olympic Games, made by the President of IOC
- Handover of the Olympic flag to Los Angeles

PHOTO: PTI

Star-studded event

While the IOC is yet to officially confirm, reports suggest Billie Eilish, Snoop Dogg and the Red Hot Chili Peppers are expected to take the stage during the ceremony. Tom Cruise is also reported to execute a death-defying stunt on the roof of the Stade de France.

IMANE KHELIF BEATS ALL ODDS TO WIN GOLD

PARIS, 10 AUG

Algerian boxer Imane Khelif has won a gold medal Friday at the Paris Olympics, emerging a champion from a tumultuous run at the Games where she endured intense scrutiny in the ring and online abuse from around the world over misconceptions about her womanhood. "For eight years, this has been my dream, and I'm now the Olympic champion and gold medalist," Khelif said through an interpreter. Asked about the scrutiny, she told reporters: "That also gives my success a special taste because of those attacks." "I'm a woman like any other woman. I was born as a woman, I live as a woman, and I am qualified." Khelif noted that she has boxed in IBA competitions since 2018 but now "they hate me, and I don't know why." *—AP*

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Mys docs remove 12cm tumour from 71-year-old woman

MYSURU, 10 AUG

Manipal Hospital successfully performed a complex kidney cancer surgery on a 71-year-old patient, removing a 12cm massive tumour that had spread to the inferior vena cava, which is the human body's largest vein. The intricate procedure, requiring a multidisciplinary team, has given the patient a new lease on life. Dr Dinesh Kumar, Urology, Andrology, and Kidney Transplant Surgeon at Manipal Hospital, said the patient had symptoms such as blood in the urine and weight loss. Investigations revealed a large renal cell carcinoma with a tumour extending into the inferior vena cava. The tumour was in the thrird stage. Renal cell carcinoma is a kidney cancer that can spread to the inferior vena cava. This condition is rare and poses significant surgical challenges. The hospital's team of experts successfully removed the kidney tumor and the complex thrombus. The patient recovered well and is now cancer-free, according to a seven-month follow-up. *—Salar News*

PHOTO: SALAR

Activists demand 'personhood' status for animals

MYSURU, 10 AUG

Animal rights activists from Vegan Karnataka protested in front of the Town Hall here on Saturday, demanding 'personhood' status for animals. The group called for an end to animal exploitation across various industries. The protesters held placards and banners, condemning the treatment of animals in sectors like agriculture, entertainment, and testing. They screened undercover footage exposing the harsh realities of animal farming, including the separation of calves from their mothers and the cruel treatment of poultry. To emphasize the plight of animals confined in small spaces, activist Nitin Jain sat inside a cage during the protest. Another activist, Anurag, urged government to take responsibility for ending animal exploitation. The group's demands include fundamental rights for animals, such as the right to life and freedom from harm. *—Salar News*

CM to face opponents politically & legally

He says Cong's march exposed BJP's scams

MYSURU, 10 AUG

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Saturday said he would face all the allegations levelled by his political opponents, JD(S) and BJP, both politically and legally.

Siddaramaiah said he has already exposed scandals that occurred during the previous BJP and JD(S) government at 'Janandolana' rally held in Mysuru city on Friday.

People of the State know what BJP-JD(S) leaders like BY Vijayendra, BS Yediyurappa, HD Kumaraswamy and R Ashoka did during their governments, Siddaramaiah said here. The Congress government had ordered inquiry against frauds and corruption cases that occurred during BJP's tenure.

The Chief Minister said his party held Janandolana to inform the people that the allegations levelled by BJP and JD(S) against him and his government are false.

Earlier, CM visited Chamundeshwari temple to have darshan of Goddess on account of Shravana Shanivara. *—Salar News*

CM Siddaramaiah inaugurates a memorial to honour former minister, and governor B Rachaiah in Chamarajanagar on Saturday PHOTO: SALAR

CM inaugurates memorial to honour B Rachaiah

Mysuru, 10 Aug

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah inaugurated a memorial on Saturday to honour former minister, MP and governor B Rachaiah at Alur village in Chamarajanagar's Kollegal taluk. Siddaramaiah described him as a mentor and a champion of the weaker sections especially for the AHINDA classes. Siddaramaiah recalled how Rachaiah had given him the opportunity to head the Kannada Kavalu Samithi during the Ramakrishna Hegde government. The Chief Minister urged Rachaiah's son, Kollegal MLA AR Krishnamurthy, to carry forward his father's legacy of protecting the Constitution and democracy. The memorial, built for Rs 4.87 crore, houses over 120 portraits of Rachaiah along with personal belongings such as his books and spectacles. *—Salar News*

BJP-JD(S)' week-long protest march ends

HDK claims land given to CM is MUDA'S

MYSURU, 10 AUG

Union Minister of Steel and Heavy Industries and JD(S) leader HD Kumaraswamy said the 3.16 acres that was gifted to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's wife Parvathi by his brother Mallikarjunaswamy belongs to Mysore Urban Development Authority (MUDA).

"It's government property. It neither belongs to CM nor a Dalit, it also doesn't belong to Ninga and family of Gandhinagar in the city," he said while addressing the gathering at Mysuru Chalo rally organised by BJP, JD(S) which culminated at Maharaja College grounds in the city on Saturday.

Leaders of both parties asserted that they will work together to bring BJP-JD(S) back to power in Karnataka, by uprooting the 'corrupt' Congress from power.

The Bengaluru-Mysuru padayatra (foot march) had sought to highlight the alleged fraudulent allotment of sites to land losers by MUDA, including to Siddaramaiah's wife Parvathi, and to corner the Congress government led by him.

On the eighth and final day of the 'Mysuru Chalo' protest march on Saturday, leaders and workers of both parties led by BJP State President and MLA BY Vijayendra and JD(S) leader Nikhil Kumaraswamy, walked the last stretch from Ramaswamy circle here to reach Maharaja's College Grounds, where a valedictory rally was organised.

Veteran BJP leader BS Yediyurappa, JD(S) leader and Union Minister HD Kumaraswamy, Union Minister Pralhad Joshi, BJP National General Secretary Radha Mohan Das Agarwal, Vijayendra, Leader of Opposition in Assembly R Asoka, former CMs Basavaraj Bommai and Sadananda Gowda, several legislators, MPs, leaders and workers from both parties took part in the rally.

Accusing Siddaramaiah and his government of indulging in 'loot' and 'daylight robbery', Yediyurappa told the gathering, "Siddaramaiah has asked me to retire from public life. Siddaramaiah, I will remain in public life till my last breath and will fight until I send you home. Don't have any doubt about it."

—Salar News & PTI

BJP and JD(S) leaders during a public meet on the last day of Mysuru Chalo padayatra, in Mysuru on Saturday PHOTO: SALAR

- The Bengaluru-Mysuru padayatra had sought to highlight the alleged fraudulent allotment of sites to land losers by MUDA, including to Siddaramaiah's wife Parvathi.

Minister seeks industry leaders' assistance for Wayanad victims

BENGALURU, 10 AUG

In the wake of devastating landslides in Wayanad in neighbouring Kerala, which claimed over two hundred lives and left several people missing, State Minister MB Patil has appealed to industry leaders and corporations across Karnataka to extend their support for the relief and rehabilitation efforts.

In a letter addressed to industry leaders, Minister for Large and Medium Industries and Infrastructure Development Patil expressed his gratitude for their ongoing contributions to the industrial growth of the State. He highlighted the catastrophic loss resulting from the recent landslides devastating the livelihoods of thousands of families in the affected regions of Mundakkai, Chooralmala, Attamala, and Meppadi. The disaster has left many without shelter, food, or basic necessities, he added.

He emphasised the critical need for immediate rescue efforts, provision of essential supplies, and long-term rehabilitation initiatives. These include rebuilding homes, restoring agricultural lands, reconstructing schools and other essential infrastructure, providing livelihood support, and ensuring access to healthcare for those affected.

—PTI

The landslides have ravaged 310 hectares of agricultural land PHOTO: PTI

St. Joseph's School organises relief for Wayanad victims

BENGALURU, 10 AUG

St Joseph's School CBSE, Vittal Mallya Road, extended a helping hand to the recent landslide victims in Wayanad. Led by Principal Fr Rohan D'Almeida, the school community including staff, students, and parents, came together to organise a relief drive.

The All India Catholic University Federation unit of the school played a pivotal role in collecting essential items such as clothes, stationery, toiletries, and non-perishable food items. The relief materials were packed and dispatched to Wayanad. *—Salar News*

PHOTO: PTI

Train services on City-M'luru section hit due to landslides

BENGALURU, 10 AUG

Officials said that train services between Mangaluru and City have been disrupted due to landslides near Sakleshpur and Alur on Saturday.

The landslip occurred at 12.30 am on Saturday between Sakleshpur and Ballupete stations in the Mysuru Division, they said.

According to South Western Railways, five train services have been affected, leaving several passengers stranded. Some Bengaluru-bound passengers walked to the main road to catch buses. South Western Railways provided immediate assistance to affected passengers. Complimentary breakfast, lunch, and water bottles were distributed at various stations.

Additionally, 26 buses were arranged to transport 1,980 passengers to their destinations. The railway has initiated refunds for 189 tickets, totalling Rs. 1.15 lakh.

Relief operations are in full swing with a team of around 450 labourers and a rescue team working on restoration of the damaged rail line.

The affected trains are:

- Train No. 16539 Yesvantpur – Mangaluru Jn Express
- Train No. 16512 Kannur – KSR Bengaluru Express
- Train No. 16596 Karwar – KSR Bengaluru Express
- Train No. 16586 Murdeshwar – SMVT Bengaluru Express
- Train No. 16511 KSR Bengaluru – Kannur Express
- Train No. 16585 SMVT Bengaluru – Murdeshwar Express
- Train No. 07377 Vijayapura – Mangaluru Central Special Express
- Train No. 07378 Mangaluru Central - Vijayapura Special Express
- Train No. 16516 Karwar - KSR Bengaluru Express
- Train No. 16595 KSR Bengaluru - Karwar Express

—Salar News

Eggs given to students taken back after photos

BENGALURU, 10 AUG

Two Anganwadi workers were placed under suspension in Koppal for allegedly taking back eggs served to children from their plates during a midday meal, after filming the act.

The matter came to light after videos of the incident went viral on social media platforms.

According to officials, two workers recorded videos and clicked pictures of eggs being served to the Anganwadi children. After making the video, they immediately took back the eggs from the plates of the children during the meal.

Eggs are a mandatory part of the midday meal which is provided in government schools and Anganwadis.

The order issued by the Women and Child Development department on 9 August stated that both workers have been suspended till further orders for dereliction of duties.Reacting to the incident, Karnataka Women and Child Development Minister Laxmi Hebbalkar said that as soon as the matter came to her notice, immediate action was taken and instructions were given to department officials to suspend the two workers.

She also said that instructions have been given to suspend the Child Development Project Officer of Koppal in connection with the incident and issue notice to the Deputy Director of the Koppal district.

—PTI

IN SOLIDARITY

Hindu activists protest against killing of Hindus in Bangladesh violence, at Freedom Park in Bengaluru on Saturday PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD

MOMENT OF PRIDE

Neeraj will breach 90m mark soon, says ex-coach

DANIEL GEORGE
BENGALURU, 10 AUG

Javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra will breach the 90-metre mark soon as he is committed to the sport, said his former coach Subedar Kashinath Naik, who hails from Sirsi of Uttara Kannada district, on Saturday.

On Thursday, Chopra made history by becoming the first Indian track-and-field athlete to win two successive Olympic medals, securing a silver in men's javelin throw at the Paris Olympics.

"It's a proud moment for me as a coach, seeing Chopra create history," said Naik, who coached the Haryana athlete from January 2015 to October 2016 at Army Sports Institute in Pune. "He was unfortunate not to clinch gold in Paris, and narrowly missed the 90m mark. Yet, despite all his success, Chopra remains humble and grounded," Naik told Salar News from Pune.

Naik is the country's first Commonwealth Games javelin throw medallist, having won a Bronze in the 2010 edition in New Delhi.

"Chopra's confidence and dedication set him apart from other athletes," Naik said. "His self-belief has only grown since he first trained under me in 2016. When an athlete consistently throws near the 90m mark, their confidence is naturally high. Chopra has that, along with incredible arm speed, which gives him an edge."

Naik also praised Chopra's unwavering dedication to his training. "Many athletes become complacent after winning a medal, but not Chopra. He won't stop until he reaches that 90-meter milestone," he said.

Reflecting on the final where Chopra narrowly missed the gold to Pakistan's Arshad Nadeem, Naik commented, "Nadeem was the only real competition for Chopra's gold. But for all of us, Neeraj Chopra will always be the golden boy of Indian athletics."

—Salar News

Javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra with his former coach Subedar Kashinath Naik PHOTO: SALAR

Hidden cam found in washroom of City cafe

BENGALURU, 10 AUG

A woman discovered a hidden camera concealed within the restroom's dustbin at Third Wave Coffee on BEL Road on Saturday. The find led to the termination of the employee responsible for the device.

According to reports, a woman found a smartphone concealed in a dustbin within the restroom. After finding the device, the woman alerted the cafe staff, who identified it as belonging to one of their employees. The incident was then reported to the police. According to a Sadashivanagar police official, "We got a call from the location at 11.30am. The phone, which had been recording for approximately two hours, was positioned with its camera aimed at the toilet seat. We have registered an FIR." According to a witness, the device was put on flight mode to avoid detection and the dustbin bag had a hole cut out specifically for the camera lens.

—Salar News

TV Somanathan appointed as Cabinet Secretary

NEW DELHI, 10 AUG

Senior IAS officer T V Somanathan was on Saturday appointed Cabinet Secretary, succeeding Rajiv Gauba. A 1987-batch IAS officer of Tamil Nadu cadre, Somanathan is currently serving as Union Finance Secretary and Secretary, Expenditure. "The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved the appointment of Shri T V Somanathan, IAS, as Cabinet Secretary with a tenure of two years from 30.08.2024. "The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has also approved the appointment of Shri T V Somanathan, IAS as Officer on Special Duty in the Cabinet Secretariat from the date he joins the assignment till he takes over as Cabinet Secretary," an official order said. Gauba took over the charge of Cabinet Secretary five years ago on 30 August, 2019. *—PTI*

PM to release 109 climate resilient varieties of crops

NEW DELHI, 10 AUG

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will release 109 high yielding, climate resilient and biofortified varieties of crops at Indian Agricultural Research Institute here on Sunday, according to an official statement. He will also interact with farmers and scientists during the event, the statement said. The 109 varieties of 61 crops to be released include 34 field crops and 27 horticultural crops, it added. Among the field crops, seeds of various cereals, including millet, forage crops, oilseeds, pulses, sugarcane, cotton, fibre and other potential crops will be released, the statement said. Among the horticultural crops, different varieties of fruits, vegetable crops, plantation crops, tuber crops, spices, flowers and medicinal crops will be released, it added. Modi always encouraged sustainable farming the release said. *—PTI*

Bribery: PIL seeks disqualification of 99 Congress MPs

PRAYAGRAJ, 10 AUG

A PIL has been filed before the Allahabad High Court seeking the disqualification of all 99 Congress MPs, arguing that the party's 'Ghar Ghar Guarantee Scheme' launched during the Lok Sabha poll campaign amounted to bribery under law. The public interest litigation (PIL) has also sought direction against the Election Commission of India (ECI), accusing it of failing to act against Congress campaign. Despite the ECI's advisory issued on 2 May this year, warning political parties against such practices, the petition alleged that the Congress continued its distribution of these cards compromising the fairness of the electoral process. According to PIL, the scheme involves the distribution of guarantee cards that promise various financial and material benefits in exchange of votes. The promise amounts to bribery under Section 123(1)(A) of the Representation of People's Act, 1951 and is punishable under Sections 171B and 171E of the Indian Penal Code, it said. *—PTI*

Centre extends deadline for Waters Tribunal report

NEW DELHI, 10 AUG

The Centre has extended the deadline for the Ravi and Beas Waters Tribunal to submit its report by another year, moving the deadline to 5 August, 2025. The extension comes as part of a series of delays in the submission of the tribunal's report, which has been pending since its constitution in April 1986 under the Inter-State River Water Disputes Act, 1956. The Ravi and Beas Waters Tribunal was established to address disputes and verify claims related to the Punjab Settlement, according to an official gazette notification. Initially, the tribunal submitted its report on 30 January, 1987. However, the central government sought further clarification and guidance on certain aspects of the report, leading to multiple extensions over the years. *—PTI*

Maldives Prez calls India closest ally amid tense ties

Ties strained since Muizzu took charge in November 2023

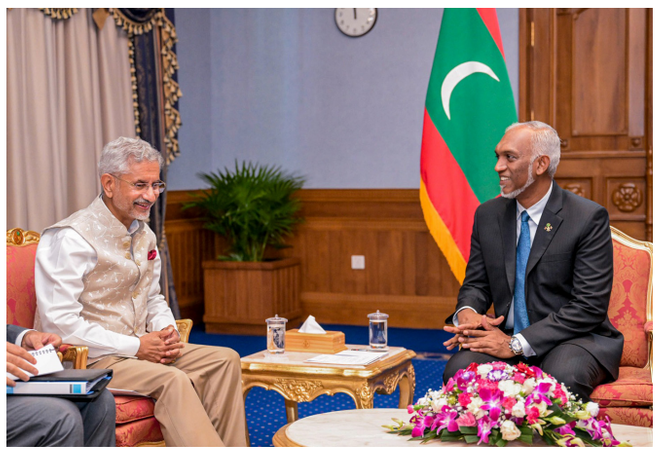
MALE, 10 AUG

President Mohamed Muizzu on Saturday acknowledged that India has always been "one of the closest" allies and "invaluable" partners, facilitating and providing aid "whenever Maldives has needed it".

He made these remarks while speaking at the ceremony held at the President's Office to hand over the completed water supply and sewerage facilities on 28 islands in the Maldives, funded by the Government of India's Line of Credit Facility through EXIM Bank of India.

The President highlighted that these initiatives would provide significant economic benefits, boost the local economies, and together contribute to the nation's prosperity. He further added that these projects are key milestones in the Maldives' bilateral relations with India.

During the event, President Muizzu reaffirmed his administration's full commitment to strengthening the historic and close connections between the Maldives and India, a press release issued by his office said.



External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar with Maldives President Mohamed Muizzu, in Maldives on Saturday **PHOTO: PTI**

Speaking at the ceremony, Muizzu extended deep gratitude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Indian government, and the "friendly people" of India for their "generous and continued assistance" to the Maldives.

The President also recalled his recent visit to India, to attend the swearing-in ceremony of Prime Minister Modi and expressed appreciation for the invitation and the opportunity to meet him as well as President Droupadi Murmu.

The president expressed his appreciation to External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, who is currently in Maldives on an official visit, for the efforts to strengthen relations between the Maldives and India.

The ties between India and the Maldives came under severe strain since Muizzu, known for his pro-China leanings, took charge of the top office in November 2023.

Within hours of his oath, he had demanded the withdrawal of Indian military personnel manning three aviation platforms in the Maldives. *—PTI*

EAM inaugurates India funded water projects

MALE, 10 AUG

- The Water and Sanitation Projects in 28 islands, commissioned under the Indian Line of Credit Facility by the Exim Bank of India, were described as the largest climate adaptation implemented in Maldives with international collaboration

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Saturday handed over to the Maldives a massive water and sanitation project worth USD 110 million funding from India at 28 islands covering seven per cent of the population of the archipelagic nation.

Jaishankar, who is here on a three-day official visit, virtually inaugurated the projects at an event at President Mohammad Muizzu's office here and received grateful appreciation from him and Jaishankar's counterpart.

Maldives' Minister of Construction and Infrastructure Dr Abdulla Muththalib, whose ministry implemented the projects, was also present on the occasion.

The Water and Sanitation Projects in 28 islands, commissioned under the Indian Line of Credit Facility by the Exim Bank of India, were described by Jaishankar as the "largest climate adaptation implemented in Maldives with international collaboration."

"It is also significant to note that the completion of this project has supplemented the Government of Maldives endeavours in reaching its Sustainable Development Goals by establishing climate resilient and cost-effective water and sewerage systems," Jaishankar said.

Maldives' Minister for Foreign Affairs Moosa Zameer said in a post on X that he was "deeply grateful" to India for its "steadfast partnership and enduring friendship" while the Maldives' Ministry of Foreign Affairs described it as a "testament to enduring friendship & cooperation" in a separate post on X. *—PTI*

NEARLY 400 DEAD

Disaster not normal, will give Wayanad all help it needs: PM

WAYANAD, 10 AUG

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday assured the Centre will provide all possible help in the relief and rehabilitation efforts in the landslides-hit areas of Wayanad district and said that the landslides is "not normal".

Modi said everyone's prayers were with the survivors of the landslides, which he said had 'shattered' the dreams of several families.

The Centre will stand together with the Kerala government on helping those who lost everything in the disaster, he said. The landlides have claimed the lives of 400 dead people so far, while over 130 are missing.Prime Minister Modi carried out an aerial survey of disaster-hit areas.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi interacts with a child affected by the recent landslide, at AWS Hospital in Wayanad, on Saturday **PHOTO: PTI**

Modi conducted aerial survey of the landslide-ravaged Chooralmala, Mundakkai, and Punchirimattom hamlets aboard an Indian Air Force helicopter, on which he departed to Wayanad from Kannur Airport around 11.15 am. *—PTI*

Hopefully PM will find time to also visit Manipur, says Cong

NEW DELHI, 10 AUG

The Congress on Saturday said it is good that Prime Minister Narendra Modi is in Wayanad and hoped that he would "find the time and the inclination" to also visit Manipur "which has been experiencing pain" for more than 15 months now.

The Opposition party's remarks come on a day Modi is in Kerala's landslides-hit Wayanad.

"It is good that the non-biological PM is in Wayanad today. It was a devastating tragedy," Congress general secretary in-charge communications Jairam Ramesh said in a post in Hindi on X.

"After this, he (Modi) is scheduled to visit Ukraine to stop the war once again. Hopefully he will find the time and the inclination before then to also visit Manipur which has been experiencing so much pain, anguish, and agony for over 15 months now," Ramesh said.

Kuki Students' Organisation protests against Centre's decision to withdraw Assam Rifles from Manipur in New Delhi on Saturday **PHOTO: PTI**

Meanwhile, Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma criticised Congress for its "silence" regarding the "attacks" on Hindus in Bangladesh, alleging that the party is more concerned about Gaza. *—PTI*

Influx from Bangladesh cause for concern, says Biren

IMPHAL, 10 AUG

Manipur Chief Minister N Biren Singh on Saturday said the influx of people from Bangladesh in the wake of unrest in the neighbouring country is a cause for concern, and his government has imposed night curfew in some districts to check infiltration.

"I am in touch with the external affairs ministry. As for our security, we have imposed night curfew in Pherzawl and Jiribam districts to check the influx," Singh told reporters here.

Over 230 people were killed in Bangladesh violence.The Chief Minister was speaking at a function to mark the Centre's 'Har Ghar Tiranga' initiative.

"I appeal to all legislators to organise lunch at different relief camps across Manipur on Independence Day, as well as interact with the inmates to address their problems and grievances," Singh said. *—PTI*

MVA CM face to be declared soon: Cong

LATUR, 10 AUG

Congress on Saturday stated that the chief minister of the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) alliance will be declared after the Maharashtra assembly elections even though the allies have already started their seat-sharing talks.

BJP leaders claimed earlier this week that Shiv Sena (UBT) Chief Uddhav Thackeray visited Delhi and met top Congress leaders only to ensure that he would be the chief ministerial candidate of the MVA. *—PTI*

TOP COURT'S VERDICT

Cong opposes suggestion on 'creamy layer'

NEW DELHI, 10 AUG

Asserting that the idea of denying reservation to SCs and STs on account of the creamy layer concept is "condemnable", Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Saturday said the government should have bought legislation in Parliament to nullify the Supreme Court judgement on the issue.

Earlier this month, a seven-judge Bench of the Supreme Court led by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud ruled in a 6:1 majority judgement that State governments were permitted to sub-classify communities within the SC list based on empirical data. Supreme Court judge Justice BR Gavai had said that States must evolve a policy for identifying the creamy layer even among theSC and ST and deny them the benefit of reservation.

Mallikarjun Kharge **PHOTO: PTI**

"Who do you want to benefit by bringing a creamy layer? By bringing a creamy layer (concept) on one hand you are denying untouchables and giving to those who have enjoyed privileges for thousands of years. I condemn this," Kharge said.

This issue that has been raised by the seven judges shows that they have not thought about SCs and STs in a serious manner, he said. *—PTI*

'SHARAD, UDDHAV TRIGGERING RIOTS'

CHHATRAPATI SAMBHAJINAGAR, 10 AUG

Maharashtra Navnirman Sena chief Raj Thackeray on Saturday alleged Sharad Pawar and Uddhav Thackeray were trying to use the Maratha quota stir to trigger riots ahead of the State Assembly elections, especially in Marathwada region.

"Using his agitation as a shield, people like Sharad and Uddhav are doing politics in Marathwada," Raj said on the concluding day of his Marathwada tour, a day after some workers, suspected to be belonging to Shiv Sena (UBT), threw betel nuts when his convoy was passing in Beed city.

Four Shiv Sena (UBT) workers were held for the act.

Speaking about the incident, the MNS chief claimed the (Beed) district Shiv Sena (UBT) president raised casteist slogans to show his allegiance to Jarange. *—PTI*

Fight against tyranny: Sisodia

NEW DELHI, 10 AUG

Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader and former Delhi deputy chief minister Manish Sisodia on Saturday called upon party workers and people to fight against "tyranny" in the country and said if all Opposition parties stand united against "dictatorship", Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal will come out of prison within 24 hours.

He urged allies of the BJP-led NDA as well as the Opposition INDIA bloc parties to unite against "dictatorship". *—PTI*

Sisodia shared a photo with his wife Seema on his first morning tea after 17 months of jail

COPS RELEASE J&K TERRORISTS' SKETCH

JAMMU, 10 AUG

A massive search operation was launched in a forest area of Jammu and Kashmir's Kathua district where police on Saturday released sketches of four terrorists spotted in 'dhoks' (mud-houses) and announced a cash reward of Rs 20 lakh for credible information on them, officials said.

Kathua witnessed a deadly ambush by terrorists on an army patrol in forest belt of Machedi on 8 July, resulting in the killing of five soldiers, including a Junior Commissioned Officer. *—PTI*

PHOTO: X/@KATHUAPOLICE

2013 UPA REPLY SAYS

'There's no concept of national disasters in rules'

NEW DELHI, 10 AUG

Government sources on Saturday cited a 2013 reply in Parliament by a Congress-led UPA government minister to emphasise that no concept of "national disaster" exists under the rules of the central government.

The clarification came amid a demand, including from Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi, that the landslide tragedy in Kerala's Wayanad be declared a national disaster.

The then minister of state for home and Congress MP from Kerala Mullappally Ramachandran had told the Lok Sabha in 2013 in a reply to a question that "there is no provision to declare a natural disaster as a national disaster", the sources noted.

According to sources, state government concerned is responsible for undertaking necessary rescue and relief measures **PHOTO: ANI**

The reply stated that the government of India adjudges a calamity of severe nature on case-to-case basis, taking into account its intensity and magnitude, level of relief assistance, capacity of the state government to tackle the problem, and alternatives and flexibility available within the plan to provide succour and relief etc.

The priority is immediate relief and response assistance in the context of a natural calamity. As such there is no fixed prescribed norms, he had said. However, for calamity of a "severe nature", additional assistance is also considered from the National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF) after following the established procedure, the reply stated. He said the state government concerned is responsible for undertaking necessary rescue and relief measures.

Ramachandran was replying to the question on whether the government has fixed any norms for declaring a calamity of severe nature striking the country as a "national calamity". *—PTI*

Soren shows prisoners' stamp, vows to fight wrong

RANCHI, 10 AUG

Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren on the occasion of his birthday on Saturday shared a post of prisoner's stamp on his hand and termed it a symbol of current challenges in democracy.

The stamp was put on his hand (by the jail authorities) when he was released from jail, he said.

"Today, on the occasion of my birthday, the memory of the past one year is imprinted in my heart - that is the prisoner's stamp - which was put on my hand when I was released from jail. This mark is not just of mine, but a symbol of the current challenges of our democracy," Soren wrote in the social media post.

PHOTO: X/@HEMANTSOREN

Soren was released from Birsa Munda Jail in Ranchi on 28 June. He said he would raise his voice for every person, community, who have been suppressed, denied justice and is being harassed on the basis of colour, community, food habits, clothing and others. *—PTI*

PHOTO: TRING

Marathi actor Vijay Kadam dies at 66

MUMBAI, 10 AUG

Veteran Marathi theater and film actor Vijay Kadam died here on Saturday, family sources said. Kadam, 66, was battling cancer for the last one and a half years. He started his career as a child actor in theater and earned fame in comedy roles in the 1980s. Kadam, who considered yesteryear actors Sharad Talwalkar and Raja Gosavi as his idols, went on to do diverse roles on stage as well as in television serials and films in the next two decades. 'Rathchakra', 'Vichcha Majhi Puri Kara', 'Tur Tur', 'Sahi Re Sahi' were some of the hit plays where he made his mark. He also featured in Marathi films including 'Irsal Karti', 'Vasudev Balwant Phadke' and 'Halad Rusli Kunku Hasla'. Kadam was also seen in a few Bollywood films such as 'Ghar Ek Mandir' and 'Aflatoon'. *—PTI*

BSF recovers ₹15 cr heroin from Pak border in R'than

JAIPUR, 10 AUG

Border Security Force (BSF) on Saturday recovered a drone and a packet containing 3kg of heroin, worth around Rs 15 crore, near a village along the India-Pakistan border in Rajasthan's Anupgarh, police said. After getting information from a local farmer, the BSF jawans found a drone carrying a packet was found near 30APD village of the district this morning, they said. The drone apparently got discharged or faced technical default, foiling the smuggling bid, the police said. Anupgarh SHO Anil Kumar said when Kaluram Nayak, a resident of village 30APD, went to his field, he saw a drone. The farmer informed the BSF jawans about this. The BSF jawans found heroin from a yellow packet along with the drone and they informed the local police about this, he said, adding that a case has been registered and investigation is being done. *—PTI*

7 held for stealing Chola-era Vishnu idol valued at ₹2 cr

CHENNAI, 10 AUG

Seven men who allegedly stole a Chola-era Vishnu idol were arrested and the antique said to be worth Rs 2 crore was recovered from them, the Tamil Nadu Idol Wing CID police said on Saturday. Following a tip off on 8 August, the Thanjavur Range Idol Wing CID team led by an Inspector of Police initiated a vehicle check on the Thanjavur-Tiruchirappalli National Highways at Melathiruvizhapatti and found a two-and-a-half feet metal idol in a car. Upon enquiring, one among the five occupants in the car, A Dhinesh, 28, of Thiruvarur, claimed that his father stumbled upon the idol while digging the ground at Thozhuvur river 12 years ago. He had not informed the Tashildar or Village Administrative Officer (VAO) about the find and kept it concealed in his cattle shed. *—PTI*

CRPF jawan dies after being hit by goods train in UP

ETAWAH, 10 AUG

A 35-year-old CRPF jawan was killed after being hit by a goods train, a police official said on Saturday. The incident happened around 7 pm on Friday, when Jabar Singh of ali Khurd village was returning home from his farm, Barthana Station House Officer Devendra Singh said. According to police, Singh worked in the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) and had come home on leave. His body has been sent for postmortem, they added. *—PTI*

Didi seeks death row after 1 arrested for rape, murder of doc

Autopsy confirms sexual abuse before murder

KOLKATA, 10 AUG

Police arrested one person for his alleged involvement in the sexual assault and murder of a woman postgraduate trainee doctor at the state-run RG Kar Medical College and Hospital, a senior officer said on Saturday.

Preliminary autopsy report has indicated sexual abuse of the woman doctor before she was killed, police said.

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee asserted that her government will seek death penalty for the accused in the alleged sexual assault and murder of a woman postgraduate trainee doctor.

Banerjee also said she has asked officials to ensure that the case be tried in a fast track court.

The body of the woman doctor was found inside the seminar hall of a government-run hospital in north Kolkata on Friday. A preliminary autopsy report has indicated sexual abuse before she was killed.

Banerjee said the West Bengal government has no objection to an investigation into the case by any agency, including the CBI, if there is a demand for it.

Describing the incident as gruesome and despicable, she urged the junior doctors at various state-run hospitals to carry on giving healthcare services, while holding the protests.

The CM said police camps had been set up in every hospital to prevent any assault on doctors.

Meanwhile, junior doctors at various hospitals in West Bengal held protest sit-ins and took out processions demanding exemplary punishment to those involved in the case.

Junior doctors protest against the alleged rape and killing of a doctor, at RG Kar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata, on Saturday *PHOTO: PTI*

> **The incident is unfortunate and despicable. It feels like a personal loss to me. Their [doctors] anger and demands are justified and I support it** -Mamata Banerjee, West Bengal Chief Minister

A police officer said that arrested man, an outsider had free access to the different departments of the hospital.

Talking more about the arrested accused, police said that they recovered a torn part of a Bluetooth earphone which led to the culprit.

In fact, other PGTs and female doctors also identified the culprit from CCTV footage grabbed from other parts of the hospital premises, a source in the police department said.

Police officers also claimed that the arrested accused had given different statements during the grilling done.

The semi-nude body of a woman postgraduate trainee (PGT) doctor was found inside the seminar hall of the government-run hospital in Kolkata on Friday. The deceased, a second-year student of the chest medicine department, was on duty on Thursday night. The body bore injury marks.

Her father had alleged that she was raped and murdered inside RG Kar Medical College and Hospital and efforts are on to hide the truth. *—PTI*

Prez Murmu receives Timor Leste's highest civilian award

DILI, 10 AUG

India and Timor-Leste share warm and friendly relations based on a shared commitment to the values of democracy and pluralism, President Droupadi Murmu said on Saturday. This was as she held extensive discussions with her counterpart Jose Ramos-Horta on enhancing bilateral cooperation in diverse fields.

Murmu arrived here on Saturday on the first-ever presidential visit from India to Timor-Leste. Murmu received the Grand Collar of the Order of Timor-Leste, the country's highest honour from Ramos-Horta.

Murmu announced that India will soon be opening a Resident Mission in Dili.

She was accorded a ceremonial reception and guard of honour in the Presidential Palace, Dili.

Murmu discussed with President Ramos-Horta about enhancing the bilateral cooperation between India and Timor-Leste in the fields of IT, digital technology, health and pharmaceuticals, agriculture, capacity building and more.

Later, Murmu was called on by Prime Minister Xanana Gusmao, with whom she discussed bilateral relations as the two leaders reaffirmed their commitment to warm and friendly ties.

Three Agreements were also exchanged in the areas of cultural exchanges, radio broadcasting, and visa exemption for holders of diplomatic, official and service passports, it said.

Earlier, Murmu arrived here on the last leg of her three-nation visit, which also took her to New Zealand and Fiji.

In a special gesture, she was warmly received by Ramos-Horta at the airport. *—PTI*

President Droupadi Murmu being conferred with Grand-Collar of the Order of Timor-Leste, the country's highest civilian award by President José Ramos-Horta, in Dili, on Saturday *PHOTO: PTI*

Himachal ends free water rule

HIGHER-INCOME RURAL HOUSEHOLDSSHIMLA, 10 AUG

All water consumers in rural areas of Himachal Pradesh will no longer enjoy the facility of free water supply as the domestic consumers with annual income above Rs 50,000 will have to pay Rs 100 per month.

Besides, the commercial establishments will be billed according to kilolitre.

The State Cabinet, which took the decision to increase the revenue and curtail the subsidies on Thursday, also decided to provide metered water supply to commercial establishments like hotels and home-stays and bill them on commercial rates.

PHOTO: PIXABAY

However, certain underprivileged sections including widows, destitute, 'ekal nari' (single woman), handicapped and other weaker sections will continue to get water free of cost.

During the past few years, hotels and home-stays have mushroomed in rural areas and these are enjoying free water facilities while the hotels in urban areas are being supplied water and electricity at commercial rates. "The Jan Shakti Department, which is operating about 10,000 water supply schemes is suffering revenue loss of about Rs 800 crore due to supply of free water," said an official. *—PTI*

Hinderburg had accused Adani Group of stock manipulation *PHOTO: X*

Hindenburg hints at new Indian report

NEW DELHI, 10 AUG

Hindenburg Research, the short-selling firm, on Saturday suggested another major revelation involving an India The firm posted a cryptic message on X saying, "Something big soon India,".

The firm had earlier accused Adani Group of stock manipulation and accounting fraud. The January 2023 report led to a significant drop in Adani Group stock prices, reportedly causing losses of over $100 billion.

Howver, Adani Group denied all accusations made by Hindenburg and called the claims as baseless.

In July, Supreme Court dismissed a petition seeking a review of its 3 January, verdict which rejected demands for a court-monitored probe by Central Bureau of Investigation or a Special Investigation Team into allegations raised against the Adani Group.

In June of this year, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) revealed that Hindenburg had allegedly shared an advance copy of its Adani report with New York hedge fund manager Mark Kingdon two months before its public release, enabling substantial profits through strategic trading.

Hindenburg dismissed Sebi's accusations as "nonsense" and claimed that the notice was a fabricated attempt to silence those who expose corruption and fraud by powerful individuals in India. *—Agencies*

Rain deluge continues in Himachal, 120 roads closed

SHIMLA, 10 AUG

Heavy rains lashed parts of Himachal Pradesh as 128 roads remained closed in the state due to landslides and flash floods.

The regional Met office has also issued an 'orange' warning for heavy to very rainfall, accompanied by thunderstorm and lightning, at isolated places on Saturday and a 'yellow' warning for heavy rain till 16 August.

According to the State Emergency Operation Centre, 44 power and 67 water supply schemes have been disrupted due to the rains.

The Met department also warned of a low to moderate flash flood risk in isolated parts of Mandi, Sirmaur, Shimla and Kullu districts till Sunday morning.

The weather department has cautioned of the possibility of damage to plantations, crops, vulnerable structures and 'kutcha' houses due to strong winds and waterlogging in low-lying areas.

More than 100 people have been killed in rain-related incidents and the state has suffered losses of about Rs 842 crores between June 27 and August 9, officials added.

The rainfall deficit in the state during the monsoon that began on 1 June stood at 28 per cent till 10 August with Himachal Pradesh receiving 328.8 mm rain against an average of 455.5 mm. *—PTI*

The Met department also warned of a low to moderate flash flood risk in isolated parts of Mandi *PHOTO: PTI*

Normal life hit as 152 mm rains lash Puducherry

PUDUCHERRY, 10 AUG

Heavy rains lashed Puducherry and its suburbs on Saturday, leading to inundation in several housing colonies and roads in and around the town and disruption to normal life.

At least 152 mm of rainfall was recorded in just three hours between 8.30pm and 11.30pm.

In a rain-related incident, a 40-year-old man was feared washed away in storm water here.

Residents in the town said they were taken aback by heavy rains as flood water entered the houses triggering panic among them.

The territorial government declared a holiday for all schools including the aided institutions on Saturday, in view of the rain. *—PTI*

Rains trigger landslides in Badrinath

Gopeshwar, 10 Aug

Heavy overnight rain in Uttarakhand's Chamoli triggered landslides blocking the Badrinath National Highway at several points on Saturday. Debris falling from the hills following the landslides has blocked the highway in Kameda, Nandprayag and Chhinka. *—PTI*

IN BIHAR

3 held with ₹850 cr radioactive material

GOPALGANJ, 10 AUG

Bihar police arrested three people and confiscated from them 50g of a suspected radioactive substance, believed to be californium, worth approximately Rs 850 crore.

The radioactive substance is typically utilised in nuclear reactors for power production and in the treatment of severe diseases, including brain cancer.

Such a haul of seizure of rare substance has been made for the first time in the state in recent past.

Sources said that the consignment of radioactive substance was reportedly coming from Gujarat before it was intercepted at the check post. Alarmed over the recovery of the rare stone 'Californium', police have sought cooperation from the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) for carrying out a thorough investigation.

According to police sources, the operation was carried out by teams from the Special Task Force (STF), Special Operations Group (SOG), and District Intelligence Unit (DIU) after receiving a tip-off regarding the trafficking of the highly valuable radioactive material californium. The arrested are Chhotelal Prasad, a resident of Tamkuhiraj in Uttar Pradesh's Kushinagar district, along with Chandan Kumar Gupta and Chandan Ram, both residents of Gopalganj. In addition to the radioactive substance, police also confiscated four mobile phones and a motorcycle from the arrested individuals. *—ANI*

Police that a special Forensic Science Laboratory team will handle the suspected radioactive material *PHOTO: X/@MEHNDIMUDASSIR*

What is Californium?

- Californium (Cf) is a powerful synthetic radioactive element with atomic number 98
- Is produced through nuclear reactions by bombarding curium with helium ions
- Used in metal detectors, oil exploration, nuclear reactors and cancer treatment
- Each gram costs Rs 17 crore

The age of the detained students is between 16 and 20yrs *PHOTO: PIXABAY*

Rave party in Noida busted, 39 students detained

NOIDA, 10 AUG

Thirty-nine university students, some minors, were detained after police raided a "rave party" at a flat here in Uttar Pradesh, an official said on Saturday.

Information about the "rave party" at the Supernova residential society in Noida Sector-39 was received on Friday night, the police spokesperson said.

The official said a team reached the spot and detained 39 students of a well-known university.

The age of the detained students is between 16 and 20 years, police said.

The official said a large number of Haryana-labelled alcohol bottles and hookahs among other things were recovered from the party.

"During interrogation, it was found that students were invited for the party on WhatsApp. The entry fee was Rs 500 per person and Rs 800 per couple," the spokesperson said and added that a case has been registered. *—PTI*

LET IT FLY

Shopkeepers arrange tricoloured kites ahead of Independence Day, in Jammu
PHOTO: PTI

PR Sreejesh: The man who changed Indian hockey

The moment India won a bronze medal in hockey at Paris Olympics, the players burst into wild celebrations.

But PR Sreejesh quietly walked to one end of the field and bowed down in front of the goalpost - his home for almost two decades.

He will miss that home, but India will miss him even more. The goalkeeper, who played his last international match on Thursday, leaves an illustrious legacy behind him.

The "Wall of India", as he is popularly known, played a crucial role in India's podium finish. His team were up 2-1 and Spain were fighting hard for an equaliser but Sreejesh thwarted their attempts, especially in the dying minutes of the match.

The instincts and the tactful dives he is known for were on full display. His impact on the game can be understood from the fact that the Spaniards earned nine penalty corners, but couldn't convert any. Sreejesh and his defence team put their bodies on the line to protect their lead until the end.

The former Indian captain can also be credited with bringing India into contention for a medal. The knock-out match against Great Britain went into a penalty shootout and once again it was down to the Wall to protect his team - he did exactly that with two masterful saves.

He was in tears after India lost the semi-final to Germany as he knew the elusive gold medal was out of his grasp, but he quickly turned his attention to the bronze medal match. On Thursday, he was crying again – but this time in joy.

Indians cried with him and social media was flooded with tributes to the man who carried the country's hopes and dreams for nearly two decades.

India is known to be cricket crazy and players from other sports often don't get the same attention, fame or money. And for a hockey goalkeeper, it's even harder to be acknowledged.

India's goalkeeper PR Sreejesh played a crucial role in India's podium finish in Paris Olympics
PHOTO: PTI

"It's difficult to love a goalkeeper. He is invisible, and is only in the limelight when he makes a blunder. When I was young, I didn't know who India's goalkeeper was then," he told the Indian Express in 2021.

Sreejesh never chased attention or stardom; he just liked to get on with the job. It was this attitude that kept him going despite a bitter-sweet debut.

He had already made waves in the junior circuit with his quick reflexes and ability to judge a ball's trajectory in nano seconds.

But his debut in the senior team in 2006 at the South Asian Games didn't go that well. He performed well in the tournament but missed a crucial save in the final against India's arch-rival Pakistan. The criticism that followed was a steep learning curve for him.

The next few years were tough as he didn't get a permanent place in the team. Indian hockey also went through a bad phase during this period, with the team failing to even qualify for the Beijing Olympics in 2008.

But Sreejesh continued to work hard on his skills and his moment of redemption came in 2011. It was the final of the Champions Trophy and Pakistan was once again the opposing side.

Despite the team's dismal performance, the custodian of the Indian goalpost continued to perform well. His next shining moment came when he was again faced with Pakistan in the 2014 Asian Games final. He saved two penalties to end India's 16-year gold medal drought at the Games.

But if there is one moment that sums up his character, grit and determination, it has to be the bronze medal match against Holland in the Hockey World League in 2015.

He was badly injured, his thighs were covered in ice packs, his thumb was close to broken and his shoulder was covered in protective surgical tapes. He could barely walk the night before the match.

He joked that he looked like a mummy as he took his position at the goalpost. But behind all the pain and the humour was a resolve to win a medal for India in a major international tournament after more than three decades. His stunning saves in the penalty shootout helped India win the match against a superior team.

But he never let success get to his head, remaining humble and approachable and living his life without the trappings of glamour usually associated with sport stars. This endeared him to his teammates and also Indians at large.

An injury in 2017 threatened to end his career. Defying all odds, he made a comeback after two surgeries and several months of rehabilitation.

But his performance took time to peak and critics said his famed reflexes had slowed down. Younger goalkeepers were also making a claim for his spot. But he stayed away from the noise and continued to work hard.

He was once again ready to end another drought - a 41-year wait for a hockey medal at the Olympics. He helped India win a bronze medal at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics with his astute understanding of the game.

He was able to ride through many storms in his career largely due to his upbringing.

Sreejesh was born into a farming family in the southern state of Kerala.

He loved sports but didn't enjoy running as much. So after trying out other sports and different playing positions in hockey, he chose goalkeeping as it didn't involve much running.

He did well at the state level and was called for the national trials in Delhi in 2003.

The 15-year-old arrived in the Indian capital after a train journey of more than 48 hours. He spoke little Hindi – the language spoken by most players at the camp.

Staying with mostly Hindi-speaking boys in the hostel, he embraced the challenge and learnt the language – including some pretty colourful words that were often heard during tense matches in later years.

When asked about his legacy, he prefers not to talk about his achievements.

"And for the youngsters and kids, when they pad up and step on to the hockey field, they should feel I want to become a keeper like Sreejesh." *—BBC News*

LETTERS write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

SALAR ساڈا

B'desh: Big challenges ahead for Md Yunus

Bangladesh was thrust into the global spotlight this week after large-scale, violent unrest forced the country's longtime premier, Sheikh Hasina, to quit and flee to neighboring India.

The mass protests began as a student movement against quotas in government jobs but then escalated into a broader anti-government uprising.

The quota scheme reserved over half of well-paid and secure government jobs for specific groups. Many protesters saw it as discriminatory and unfair, particularly at a time when Bangladesh is facing economic stress.

"The unemployment issue is the root cause of the student movement," he added.

Not enough jobs for the youth

During Hasina's 15-year rule, Bangladesh made some economic progress, building big-ticket projects such as highways, rail lines and ports, as well as expanding the electric grid.

The country's garment industry also became one of the world's most competitive.

But the $450-billion (₹412-billion) economy has struggled since the COVID-19 pandemic. Shrinking foreign exchange reserves even pushed the government to seek a multibillion-dollar loan from the International Monetary Fund.

Even though the South Asian country's gross domestic product is currently growing at over 5% annually, it has struggled to create enough, decent-paying jobs for its vast youth population.

Nearly half of Bangladesh's 170 million people are aged under 30. While this is generally seen as a demographic dividend, it could turn into a "demographic curse" if these people can't find productive employment, said Mansur.

Joblessness among people aged 15 to 24 in the country was a high 15.7% in 2023, according to the International Labor Organization.

At the same time, hundreds of thousands of young new graduates are entering the labor market every year. "But they are not employable, given the extremely poor quality of education and the lack of required skills," said Mansur, pointing out that the youth "felt deprived, cheated upon and that they will never get employed."

Soaring prices hit people hard

Against this backdrop, one of the big tasks facing the interim government led by Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus, which was sworn in on Thursday, will be to facilitate job growth.

But that's not the only challenge. Bangladesh has seen persistently high inflation in recent years, with the rate hovering at nearly 10 per cent in 2023.

Fahmida Khatun, head of research at the Center for Policy Dialogue think tank in Dhaka, told DW that the economic situation in Bangladesh has been deteriorating for the past couple of years.

She pointed to high inflationary pressure worldwide since the COVID-19 pandemic and the start of Russia's war against Ukraine. "But over the past two years, almost all countries have managed to bring their inflation down, except Bangladesh," she said.

Khatun blamed the situation on the central bank's inability to take appropriate measures to tackle the problem.

"They were stuck up on policies which are not beneficial for the country, but rather only for a certain group of people," she said, accusing Hasina and her Awami League party of compromising the independence of all the country's regulatory bodies.

Can Yunus push through structural reforms?

In response to the turmoil that ensued after Hasina's dramatic exit, many shops and factories shut their doors this week.

That included factories in the textile sector, which is crucial to Bangladesh's economy. The country earns over $46 billion annually by exporting clothes abroad, with most of them destined for Europe and the US. More than 4 million workers, mostly women, are employed across some 4,000 factories, which supply many of the world's top brands, including Levi's, Zara and H&M.

"From an economic perspective, getting factories up and running again will be a priority," Gareth Leather and Shilan Shah, economists at London-based Capital Economics, said in a research note this week.

They warned that garment makers could shift their operations elsewhere if authorities failed to get a grip over the situation. "But provided peace and stability is restored to the streets soon, we suspect that the long-term impact on the sector will be relatively small."

On Friday, the interim administration deployed the army in the industrial districts to help reopen and ease operations of the clothing factories, the German dpa news agency reported, citing Shovon Islam, one of the directors of Bangladesh Garments Manufacturers and Exporters Association.

Mansur said the country needs fundamental reforms to address the structural challenges facing the economy. *—DW News*

Bangladesh's figurehead President Mohammed Shahabuddin administers the oath of office to Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus
PHOTO: PTI

Muslims in the UK question sense of belonging after riots

On Friday, a holy day for Muslims, fewer women are attending prayers at their local mosques across the United Kingdom. Those who dare out are exchanging safety tips. Move in groups, avoid crowds, keep your car windows closed.

Here in Liverpool, the sun is bright and the school summer holidays are in full swing. But it is one of the English cities where far-right race riots exploded this week. There is an eerie mood. There are hardly any children on the streets. The gates of a historic church are locked.

"I'm quite a strong person, and yet I feel fear, you know? I feel scared," said Saba Ahmed, a resident who works for a multicultural hub that serves local communities.

"It just doesn't feel right."

Fears spread over the city as Islamophobic and racist riots took place in the wake of the killing of three young girls in Southport, less than one hour's drive from here.

Rumours on social media falsely claimed that the suspect was a Muslim and an asylum seeker. The disinformation, since neither is true, fuelled the worst bout of violence to hit the nation in years.

The riots, which took place in dozens of areas, have been extinguished thanks to the thousands of antiracism protesters who outnumbered them in a show of solidarity with those affected. Police have handed heavy sentences to rioters, which has also dissuaded others from joining in.

Observers have blamed politicians and some sections of the media for railing against immigration while demonising Muslims and asylum seekers.

"After the 'War on Terror', the political conversation and legislation around counterterrorism was about targeting Muslim communities as a threat to national security," said Shabna Begum, head of Runnymede Trust, a race equality and civil rights think tank.

"And now they have been identified as a cultural threat to British democracy based on ages-old tropes on the Muslim civilisation being barbaric."

Over the years, mainstream politics and some media soaked up that narrative which paved the way for the "normalisation of an Islamophobic rhetoric" in the UK and therefore the dehumanisation of Muslims, she explained.

As political attention shifted towards a rise in undocumented migrants crossing the Channel, many say brown and Black asylum seekers have been thrown into the same category.

Muslims, refugees and non-White people were attacked at random in the riots
PHOTO: EPA

Muslims, refugees and non-White people were attacked at random in the riots.

According to Chris Allen, an associate professor of criminology at the University of Leicester, both Labour and the Conservatives have contributed to the vilification of Muslims, clearing the way for the general populace to slur minority groups.

"This is partly the legacy of the Brexit Leave campaign's toxic rhetoric on popular views about immigration that continued right up to the recent general election," Allen said, adding that politicians have failed to call out Islamophobia when they see it.

On a recent popular morning television show, Labour politician Zahra Sultana was asked why identifying Islamophobia and the racialised nature of many attacks was important in tackling racism. As she tried to answer, she was interrupted by the panel, which many on social media said exemplified an attempt to silence discussions on racism.

"We need to call this racism, and we need to call this Islamophobic, because if we don't, we fail to address what is going on. Language is really important," Sultana said on the programme.

- According to Chris Allen, an associate professor of criminology at the University of Leicester, both Labour and the Conservatives have contributed to the vilification of Muslims, clearing the way for the general populace to slur minority groups

During Israel's continuing war on Gaza, anti-Muslim hate crimes have increased – according to TellMAMA, such incidents tripled in the first four months of the conflict. Research by the Institute for Strategic Dialogue also shows a sharp rise in anti-Muslim content across online platforms during the same period. Similarly, UK groups that monitor anti-Jewish hate crimes have reported a rise during the war.

According to Imam Adam Kelwick, the missing element is dialogue.

Standing outside Liverpool's Abdullah Quilliam mosque, he has just returned from an unusual meeting over coffee.

He had sat across the table from a far-right protester who was among the dozens who rallied outside the mosque recently.

At the time, Kelwick confronted the situation by crossing police lines and offering burgers and chips to the angry crowd. He hugged protesters and promised more dialogue.

"What happens when you come together is that you start talking and listening. You start to find out that many of the concerns that the other side has are also your concerns," said Adam. "All it takes is a human interaction."

He plans to open the mosque's gates on Saturday to engage in more discussions with members of the far right.

But as he attempts to talk, others need time to heal.

"There was a feeling that we were so embedded in the community – all the progress of the past years seemed to have dashed in the course of one evening," said Tawhid Islam, a member and trustee of the Liverpool Region Mosque Network. "A seed of doubt has now been planted and people ask themselves, 'Am I part of this community if I am not White?'" *—Courtesy, Al Jazeera*

PHOTO: PTI

Pakistani forces destroy Baloch genocide memorial

QUETTA, 10 AUG

In a troubling act of repression, Pakistani forces reportedly targeted and demolished the "Symbol of Baloch Genocide" at the sit-in protest outside Balochistan University. The incident took place during the late hours of Friday night. Taking to X, Baloch Yakjehti Committee stated, "In a disheartening act of repression, the "Symbol of Baloch Genocide" placed at the sit-in protest in front of Balochistan University was deliberately broken by state institutions during the late hours of the night. This memorial, which honoured the thousands of Baloch lives lost to genocide and the ongoing suffering of the Baloch Nation, was destroyed in an attempt to erase the painful history it represents." *—ANI*

Japan PM cancels Asia visit over quake warning

TOKYO, 10 AUG

As Japan steps up its disaster preparedness following an advisory warning of a massive earthquake in a vast area along the Pacific coast, the country's Prime Minister has cancelled a planned trip to Central Asia next week, local media reported on Saturday. Prime Minister Fumio Kishida cancelled his planned four-day trip to Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Mongolia, Kyodo News reported stating that the step was taken a day after an advisory by the Japan Meteorological Agency. The Japan Met department said a higher-than-usual probability of a megaquake is predicted around the Nankai Trough. On Thursday, a powerful earthquake 7.1 magnitude earthquake struck off Japan's southern coast. *—ANI*

6 Jan rioter who attacked cops with pole gets 20 years

WASHINGTON DC, 10 AUG

A California man who attacked police officers with a flag pole and other weapons during the US Capitol riot has been jailed for 20 years. Prosecutors said David Dempsey, 37, was one of the most violent members of the crowd during the attack on 6 January, 2021. They said he used "his hands, feet, flag poles, crutches, pepper spray, broken pieces of furniture", among other things, to injure at least two officers. Dempsey pleaded guilty to assaulting police officers. More than one thousand people have been arrested for crimes related to the Capitol riot, while hundreds have been convicted. Only Enrique Tarrio, the former leader of the far-right Proud Boys group, has received a longer sentence than Dempsey. *—BBC News*

German tourists accused of defacing US park

BERLIN, 10 AUG

Three German tourists face possible financial penalties after being accused of defacing property at Joshua Tree National Park in California. Park authorities accused the trio of firing paintballs at signs, bathrooms and dumpsters throughout the park. Meanwhile, they said the damage was discovered on Sunday after a park ranger found "fresh yellow paintball splatter on structures and signs" during a campground patrol. Park rangers then questioned the tourists, who admitted that they had fired paintballs in the park with a compressed paintball gun and slingshots, authorities said. Vandalism of a US national park carries a maximum penalty of USD 5,000, as well as the possibility of a prison sentence for up to six months, according to the National Park Service (NPS). *—BBC News*

Israeli strike on Gaza school shelter kills more than 100

Attack targeted Hamas command centre within the school

DEIR AL-BALAH, 10 AUG

More than 100 Palestinians have been killed and dozens wounded in an Israeli strike on a school sheltering displaced people in Gaza City, according to Palestinian officials.

Three Israeli bombs hit the al-Tabin school, located in Daraj district, Gaza's civil defence agency said of the attack on Saturday which it described as a "horrific massacre".

The Israeli military acknowledged the strike, claiming it hit a Hamas command centre within the school. Hamas denied that.Women, children and the elderly are reported to be among the dead and the toll was expected to rise. The attack took place while people were performing morning prayers and triggered a fire that ripped through the building.

Reporting from Khan Younis in southern Gaza, Al Jazeera's Hani Mahmoud said it was a "deliberate" attack on civilians but also "a violation of people's religious rites as they were in a time considered sacred".

Israel used three bombs weighing 907kg each in its attack PHOTO: PTI

Ismail al-Thawabta, the head of Gaza's Government Media Office, told Al Jazeera that the Israeli army used three bombs weighing 907kg each in its attack.

He said Israel was aware of the presence of displaced people inside the school.

The Israeli military said its air forces struck a "command and control centre" that "served as a hideout for Hamas terrorists and commanders". Without providing evidence, the Israeli military said in a separate statement that it had intelligence indicating there were 20 Hamas and Islamic Jihad fighters, including senior commanders, operating from the school.

It also said that the civilian casualty figures given by Palestinian authorities was "exaggerated".

Israeli forces have repeatedly attacked schools used as shelters, claiming they are command centres for Hamas, the Palestinian group that governs Gaza, to hide fighters and manufacture weapons.

Three missiles ripped through the school and the mosque inside, where about 6,000 displaced people were taking shelter from the war, said Mahmoud Bassal, a spokesperson for the Civil Defence first responders who operate under the Hamas-run local government. Saturday's attack was the fourth such incident in a week. Hamas has denied Israeli accusations that it operates from civilian facilities such as schools and hospitals. Palestinian journalist Hossam Shabat reported that rescue teams were unable to help those trapped by the flames as the Israeli military cut water access to the area.

—Courtesy, Al-Jazeera

US announces $125M security assistance package for Ukraine

WASHINGTON DC, 10 AUG

The US is sending Ukraine an additional USD 125 million in weapons to assist in its military operations against Russia, including much-needed air defence capabilities, radars to detect and counter enemy artillery and anti-tank weapons, the White House announced Friday.

The latest package comes as Ukraine has launched its largest ground offensive on Russian soil since the war began in February 2022. The offensive in the Kursk region has prompted Moscow to declare an emergency and send reinforcements there.

National security spokesman John Kirby said Ukraine's use of US -provided weapons in the offensive was in line with administration policies. The Biden administration has approved their use in cross-border counterstrikes against Russia but not against targets deeper inside Russia, although the specific distances are not clear.

PHOTO: ANI

- Ukrainian troops are continuing their offensive in Russia's western Kursk region, as their surprise cross-border attack enters a fifth day

The weapons in this latest aid package will be drawn from existing US stocks and will include Stinger missiles, 155mm and 105mm artillery ammunition, High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems (HIMARS) ammunition and vehicles. It brings the total amount of US aid to Ukraine since 2022 to USD 55.6 billion.

July saw the heaviest civilian casualties in Ukraine since October 2022. Conflict-related violence killed at least 219 civilians and injured 1,018 in July, the mission said.

Russia on Saturday announced what it called a counterterrorism operation to increase security in the border region where an incursion this week by Ukrainian forces caught Russian troops off-guard.

The Russian Defence Ministry said that the army has conducted airstrikes against Ukrainian forces, including using a thermobaric bomb that both causes a blast wave and creates a vacuum that suffocates its targets. *—AP*

North Korea not to seek help for flood victims

SEOUL, 10 AUG

North Korea will not seek outside help to recover from floods that devastated areas near the country's border with China, leader Kim Jong Un said as he ordered officials to bring thousands of displaced residents to the capital to provide them better care.

Kim said it would take about two to three months to rebuild homes and stabilise the areas affected by floods. Until then, his government plans to accommodate some 15,400 people — a group that includes mothers, children, older adults and disabled soldiers — at facilities in Pyongyang, North Korea's official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) said Saturday.

KCNA said Kim made the comments during a two-day trip to northwestern town of Uiju through Friday to meet flood victims and discuss recovery efforts. The agency gave Kim its typical effusive praise, saying the visit showed his "sacred leadership" and "warm love and ennobling spirit of making devoted service for the people."

- State media reports said heavy rains in late July left 4,100 houses, 7,410 acres of agricultural fields, and numerous other public buildings, structures, roads and railways

State media reports said heavy rains in late July left 4,100 houses, 7,410 acres of agricultural fields, and numerous other public buildings, structures, roads and railways flooded in the northwestern city of Sinuiju and the neighbouring town of Uiju. *—AP*

Time for truce: Kamala to pro-Palestine activists

ARIZONA, 10 AUG

United States Democratic presidential candidate Kamala Harris has told pro-Palestine protesters who interrupted her campaign rally in Arizona that now is the time for a ceasefire deal in Israel's war on Gaza.

The demonstrators shouted, "Free, free Palestine" as Harris spoke to an estimated 15,000 people in the city of Glendale in Arizona, one of the states she's vying to win to defeat her Republican opponent Donald Trump.

The latest incident highlights the balancing act she has to make to address a segment of her party's constituency opposed to Israel's war in Gaza while avoiding alienating the general electorate sympathetic to Israel.

On Wednesday, when Harris was heckled during a rally in Michigan, she appeared to get frustrated after pro-Palestine protesters repeatedly interrupted her speech as they shouted, "Kamala, Kamala you can't hide, we won't vote for genocide."

Democratic presidential nominee Vice President Kamala Harris speaks at a campaign rally at Desert Diamond Arena in Arizona on Friday PHOTO: PTI

Harris's response was blunt. "You know what, if you want Donald Trump to win, then say that. Otherwise, I'm speaking." While a video clip of that Michigan event went viral, some critics said that Harris failed to address the question about the ceasefire and appeared dismissive of the young protesters present.

In July, when Harris met Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Washington, DC, the vice president had said that her commitment to Israel's existence and security was "unwavering", but that she "will not be silent" in the face of the "tragedies" in Gaza.

—Courtesy, Al-Jazeera

TO INFLUENCE VOTERS

Iran targeting US polls, says Microsoft

NEW YORK, 10 AUG

Iran is accelerating online activity that appears intended to influence the US election, in one case targeting a presidential campaign with an email phishing attack, Microsoft said Friday.

The findings in Microsoft's newest threat intelligence report show how Iran, which has been active in recent US elections, is evolving its tactics for another election that's likely to have global implications. The report goes a step beyond anything US intelligence officials have disclosed, giving specific examples of Iranian groups and the actions they have taken so far. Iran's United Nations mission denied it had plans to interfere or launch cyberattacks in the US Presidential election.

The report identified four examples of Iranian activity that the company expects to increase as November's election draws closer PHOTO: PTI

Microsoft's report identified four examples of recent Iranian activity that the company expects to increase as November's election draws closer.

First, a group linked to Iran's Revolutionary Guard in June targeted a high-ranking US presidential campaign official with a phishing email, a form of cyberattack often used to gather sensitive information, according to the report, which didn't identify which campaign was targeted. The group concealed the email's origins by sending it from the hacked email account of a former senior adviser, Microsoft said.

Days later, the Iranian group tried to log into an account that belonged to a former presidential candidate, but wasn't successful, Microsoft's report said. The company notified those who were targeted.

A third example Microsoft cited that Iranian groups are impersonating US activists, potentially laying the groundwork for influence operations closer to the election.

Finally, another Iranian group in May compromised an account owned by a government employee in a swing state, the report said. It was unclear whether that cyberattack was related to election interference efforts. *—AP*

People outside the United Nations headquarters demanding protection for Hindus and minorities in Bangladesh on Saturday PHOTO: X/@ HINDUACT

Protest outside UN HQ over attacks on Bangladesh Hindus

NEW YORK/ DHAKA, 10 AUG

A large crowd gathered outside the United Nations headquarters on Saturday, demanding protection for Hindus and other minorities in Bangladesh.

HinduACTion, a Washington-based NGO, said that people from all walks of life showed up spontaneously.

In a post on X, HinduACTion said, "Protests outside the @UN ongoing- calling for saving the Hindus and the minorities in #Bangladesh. Very impressive to see people from all walks of life show up spontaneously on a work day. @DcWalaDesi @nytimes @nypost #All_Eyes_On_Bangladesh #SaveBangladeshiHindus"

Members of minority communities in Bangladesh faced at least 205 incidents of attacks in 52 districts since the fall of the Sheikh Hasina-led government on 5 August, according to two Hindu organisations in the violence-hit nation.

The Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Unity Council and the Bangladesh Puja Udjapan Parishad on Friday presented the data in an open letter to 84-year-old Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus, who was sworn in as the head of an interim government. Meanwhile, a group of local Madrasa students removed the nameplate of the "Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Expressway", commonly known as the Dhaka-Mawa Expressway in Bangladesh's Munshiganj, the Dailystar reported.

Instead, they replaced it with a banner reading "Father of the Nation Hazrat Ibrahim (AS) Expressway."

American Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi urged the Secretary of State Tony Blinken to engage directly with the interim government to end this outbreak of violence, including the targeting of Hindus, and to bring those responsible to justice.

In his letter dated 8 August, a copy of which was released to the press on Friday, Krishnamoorthi said credible eyewitness reports of the anti-Hindu attacks in the New York Times, Times of India, BBC, and Reuters among other media outlets, demonstrate the scale of the attacks. *—ANI/PTI*

Brazil investigates cause of plane crash that killed 61

VINHEDO, 10 AUG

Brazilian authorities worked Saturday to piece together what exactly caused the plane crash in Sao Paulo state the prior day that killed all 61 people on board.

Local airline Voepass' plane, an ATR 72 twin-engine turboprop, was headed for Sao Paulo's international airport in Guarulhos with 57 passengers and 4 crew members when it went down in the city of Vinhedo.

Images recorded by witnesses showed the aircraft in a flat spin and plunging vertically before smashing to the ground inside a gated community, and leaving an obliterated fuselage consumed by fire. It was the world's deadliest airline crash since January 2023, when 72 people died on board a Yeti Airlines plane in Nepal that stalled and crashed while making its landing approach. *—AP*

KING CHARLES PRAISES COMMUNITY SPIRIT AGAINST RIOT AGGRESSION

LONDON, 10 AUG

Britain's King Charles III has praised the "community spirit" of the peaceful counter-protesters in a call for unity after the "aggression and criminality" of the far-right riots that broke out across different cities in the country and have resulted in over 700 arrests.

He had several phone calls on Friday evening to express his thoughts, including a call with Prime Minister Keir Starmer and the police chiefs tackling the response to the violent clashes.

A palace spokesperson said the King spoke to Starmer and held a joint call with the chair of the National Police Chiefs' Council, Chief Constable Gavin Stephens, and UK Gold Commander Ben Harrington, Chief Constable of Essex. *—AP*

TRUMP'S PLANE DIVERTED DUE TO MECHANICAL ISSUE

BOZEMAN, 10 AUG

Donald Trump travelled to Montana for a Friday night rally intended to drum up support for ousting the state's Democratic senator, but the former president's plane first had to divert to an airport on the other side of the Rocky Mountains because of a mechanical issue, according to airport staff.

Trump's plane was en route to Bozeman, Montana, when it was diverted Friday afternoon to Billings, 142 miles to the east, according to Jenny Mockel, administrative assistant at Billings Logan International Airport. Trump continued to Bozeman via private jet. *—AP*

Chinese jets endangered patrol plane: Philippines

MANILA, 10 AUG

The Philippine military chief condemned on Saturday what he said was the provocative actions of two Chinese air force aircraft that executed a dangerous manoeuver and dropped flares in the path of a Philippine air force plane on routine patrol in the South China Sea.

All those aboard the Philippine air force NC-212i light transport plane were unharmed and returned safely to Clark Air Base north of Manila after Thursday morning's incident over the Scarborough Shoal, Gen Romeo Brawner said without providing other details.

There was no immediate reaction from Chinese officials in Manila or Beijing, which dispute sovereign control over the rich fishing atoll.

The incident has been reported to Manila's Department of Foreign Affairs, which has filed numerous diplomatic protests against China's increasingly aggressive actions in the disputed waters.

Aside from China and the Philippines, Brunei, Malaysia, Vietnam and Thailand have overlapping territorial claims in the busy sea passage, a key global trade and security route, but hostilities have particularly flared since last year between Chinese and Philippine coast guard and navy forces in the Scarborough and another hotly disputed atoll, the Second Thomas Shoal.

The United States has repeatedly warned that it's obligated to defend the Philippines, its oldest treaty ally in Asia, if Filipino forces, ships and aircraft come under an armed attack, including in the South China Sea. *—AP*

Domestic food market expected to grow by over 47%

CHENNAI, 10 AUG

The domestic food market is expected to grow by over 47 per cent to reach USD 1,274 billion by 2027, a report released by the Confederation of Indian Industry and supported by Danfoss India said. India's food processing industry sees innovative startups emerging with cutting-edge technology, the report titled 'Food Processing Sector in India - Potential for Southern States. and released by CII, CII FACE (Confederation of Indian Industry -- Food and Agriculture Centre of Excellence) and Danfoss India, said. Danfoss India is a leader in heating, ventilation and air-conditioning and is the subsidiary of Denmark-headquartered engineering major Danfoss. Some of the key highlights of the report, which was released at the CII-FoodPro 2024 include the potential that southern states hold for food processing industry. The food processing industry in India sees innovative startups emerging with cutting-edge technology, the report said. The study carries insights on emerging trends, technologies and export opportunities enabling businesses to make informed decisions and tap into the sector's potential. South India's food processing sector is on the cusp of a revolution, with innovative segments like millets, ready-to-eat and plant-based dairy alternatives unlocking a treasure trove of economic opportunities for farmers. *—PTI*

BSNL to launch 4G, 5G universal SIM platforms

NEW DELHI, 10 AUG

Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) will soon roll out 4G and 5G-ready SIM platform, highlighted the Department of Telecommunications on Saturday. The department, in a social media post, stated that the rollout of 4G and 5G services will also help users choose their mobile numbers and replace SIMs without geographical restrictions "STATE-RUN TELECOM firm Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd will roll out 4G and 5G compatible over-the-air (OTA) and Universal SIM (USIM) platform, which will enable subscribers to choose their mobile numbers as well as replace SIMs without geographical restrictions," said. *—ANI*

Siemens Q3 PAT grows 25 pc to ₹531 cr

NEW DELHI, 10 AUG

G Siemens has reported a 25 per cent rise in profit after tax (PAT) at Rs 531 crore during the April-June quarter of this fiscal, on account of higher revenues. The company, which follows the October to September fiscal year, had reported a PAT of Rs 424 crore a year ago, a company statement said on Friday. Its revenues rose to Rs 4,714 crore, up 7 per cent from Rs 4,407 crore in the year-ago period. The company's new orders stood at Rs 6,245 crore, an increase of 18 per cent over Rs 5,288 Rs crore in the same period last year. *—PTI*

Godrej to set up oil palm processing mill in Tripura

MUMBAI, 10 AUG

Godrej Agrovet (GAVL) on Saturday said it will set up an Oil Palm Processing mill with an initial capacity of 10 tph (tonnes per hour) in Dhalai district in Tripura. The company's Oil Palm Plantation business (OPP) will be setting up the Oil Palm Processing mill. The mill is expected to be up and running by 2026, with an initial capacity of 10 tph, the company spokesperson told PTI. The company currently operates a nursery in Dhalai district with a capacity of 3 lakhs saplings per year and plans to increase it to 5 lakhs saplings per year, the company said in a statement. GAVL also plans to set up an advanced Research & Development center for Oil Palm in the vicinity in addition to opening up Samadhan centre, a one-stop solution centre providing comprehensive support to oil palm farmers, it added.*—PTI*

Textile sector hit after Bangladesh crisis: FM

She expresses hope that things will settle down soon

NEW DELHI, 10 AUG

The Indian garment and knitted fabric sector is witnessing a bit of uncertainty due to the Bangladesh crisis, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said on Saturday, expressing hope that the interim government there will settle things "sooner rather than later."

Interacting with the media on the sidelines of customary post Budget address to the central board of Reserve Bank of India, she said efforts are being taken to ensure that borders with the neighbouring country are safe.

With regard to Indian investments, she said, the textile industry particularly from Tamil Nadu has made investments there in good faith and they have done well having gone there.

"The exports from Bangladesh also increased because of the duty and quota liberal approach that we have towards low-income countries. They (Indian garment industry based in Bangladesh) could even export to India."

Particularly, she said, the garment and knitted fabric sector is seeing a bit of uncertainty because of the crisis in the neighbouring country.

Earlier this week, Bangladesh plunged into a political crisis when Sheikh Hasina resigned as the Prime Minister and fled the country. Soon after Parliament was dissolved leading to the creation of an interim government.

The garment and knitted fabric sector is seeing a bit of uncertainty because of the crisis

PHOTO: PTI

- Interacting with the media on the sidelines of customary post Budget address to the central board of Reserve Bank of India, she said efforts are being taken to ensure that borders with the neighbouring country are safe

The 84-year-old Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus on Thursday took oath as the head of an interim government, replacing Sheikh Hasina who abruptly resigned and fled to India leaving the country in turmoil following deadly protests against her government over a controversial quota system in jobs.

On Friday, Bangladesh's interim leader Yunus announced the portfolios of his 16-member council of advisors and named a former top diplomat to head the foreign ministry. *—PTI*

FM ATTENDS RBI BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

NEW DELHI, 10 AUG

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday attended a meeting of members of the Central Board of Directors of Reserve Bank of India (RBI) here in the national capital.

The meeting as held after the Union Budget 2024-25 and days after the Lok Sabha passed the finance bill, with a few amendments moved by the government in the parliament. Sitharaman also asked banks to come up with innovative and attractive schemes to mobilise deposits.

Addressing the media after the board meeting of the Reserve Bank of India, she said that deposits and lending are the two wheels of a cart and "deposit is moving slowly." The banks, she stressed, need to focus on core banking business which is mobilising deposits and lending to those who need funds.

In order to overcome the mismatch between deposits and lending, Sitharaman asked banks to come up with "innovative and attractive" deposit schemes to mobilise funds from the people.

RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said that interest rates are deregulated and often banks raise deposit rates to attract funds. Das while unveiling the bi-monthly monetary policy earlier in the week, also had expressed concern of deposit-lending mismatch in the banking sector. *—ANI/ PTI*

BOOST FOR HORTICULTURE SECTOR

Cabinet approves Rs 1.77cr Clean Plant Programme

NEW DELHI, 10 AUG

The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on Friday approved the Clean Plant Programme (CPP) with an outlay of Rs 1,766 crore to revolutionize India's horticulture sector.

The programme, proposed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, aims to enhance the quality and productivity of fruit crops across the nation. It was earlier announced in the Budget speech by finance minister in February 2023.

Briefing the media after the meeting, Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said that the CPP will address virus infections in horticultural crops, affecting both productivity and quality.

Key components of the programme include: establishment of nine world-class Clean Plant Centres (CPCs) across India, equipped with advanced diagnostic therapeutics and tissue culture labs; and implementation of a robust certification system under the Seeds Act 1966.

It also includes infrastructure support to large-scale nurseries for efficient multiplication of clean planting material.

PHOTO: BRITANNICA

The CPP is expected to benefit farmers, nurseries, consumers, and boost exports. It will provide farmers access to virus-free, high-quality planting material, leading to increased crop yields and improved income opportunities.

The programme will prioritise affordable access to clean plant material for all farmers, regardless of their landholding size or socioeconomic status.

It will also actively engage women farmers in its planning and implementation. The initiative aligns with Mission LiFE and the One Health initiatives, promoting sustainable and eco-friendly agricultural practices while reducing dependence on imported planting materials, it added. *—PTI*

TO GENERATE 90 MW ENERGY

MP gets North India's largest floating solar project

BHOPAL, 10 AUG

The largest floating solar project in central and north India generating 90 mega watt (MW) energy has been commissioned at Omkareshwar in Madhya Pradesh, a state minister has said.

The Omkareshwar Floating Solar Project, costing Rs 646-crore, was commissioned on August 8, state Renewable Energy Minister Rakesh Shukla said in a statement.

This project was developed under the Union Ministry of Renewable Energy and it is the biggest solar park in India and largest floating solar project in central and north India, he said.

The project is executed by SJVN Green Energy Limited, a wholly owned subsidiary of SJVN, the minister said, adding that on the commissioning of the project, the total installed capacity of SJVN has increased to 2466.50 MW.

The project is likely to generate 196.5 million units of electricity in the first year and 4,629.3 million units in the 25 years, he said.

After commissioning, the project will reduce carbon emissions by 2.3 lakh tonnes and contribute significantly to the central government's mission of achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2070, he added.

According to Shukla, the project will also help in water conservation by reducing water evaporation.

The project has been developed through competitive tariff bidding on Build Own and Operate basis for 25 years at a rate of Rs 3.26 per unit, he said.

The floating power plant was developed on the backwaters of Omkareshwar dam. *—PTI*

This project was developed under the Union Ministry of Renewable Energy

PHOTO: ANI

PHOTO: DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Aurum Equity to invest $400M in Hyderabad

PALO ALTO, 10 AUG

India-focused investment banking firm, Aurum Equity Partners, has announced a phased investment of USD 400 million to establish a next-generation, AI-powered, green data centre in Hyderabad.

The new plan significantly expands upon their previous commitment of USD 50 million, announced last year. The upcoming 100 MW data center will feature advanced AI capabilities and is designed to serve both hyperscalers and enterprises, a note added.

Speaking after the meeting, Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy said, "We are happy that Aurum has decided to build an AI-powered, Green Data Centre, which will create many new jobs in Hyderabad." Venkat Bussa, CEO and Chairman of Aurum Equity Partners stated, "Our next-generation data center framework is designed to bridge the digital divide between rural and urban India. This initiative will make government services such as e-Seva, e-Payment, and e-Education accessible to all, supporting our mission to connect every corner of the nation."

This investment under-

Signature Global cuts net debt by 16% in June

NEW DELHI, 10 AUG

Realty firm Signature Global's net debt has come down by 16 per cent in June quarter to Rs 980 crore on better cash flows amid strong sales in its housing projects.

In its latest investor presentation for the June quarter, the company informed that its net debt stood at Rs 980 crore as on June 30, 2024, as against Rs 1,160 crore at the end of the last financial year. "The company aims to keep net debt below 0.5 times of the projected operating surplus for the ongoing financial year, as a long term discipline," the presentation said.

Earlier this week, Signature Global reported a consolidated net profit of Rs 6.76 crore for the quarter ended June on higher income. The company had posted a net loss of Rs 7.22 crore in the year-ago period.

Total income rose to Rs 427.98 crore in April-June of 2024-25 fiscal from Rs 178.90 crore in the corresponding period of the previous year. Pradeep Kumar Aggarwal, Chairman and WholeTime Director, highlighted that, "In the first quarter itself, we have achieved 30 per cent of annual pre-sales target."

During the first quarter of this fiscal, Signature Global's sales bookings jumped to Rs 3,120 crore from Rs 880 crore in the year-ago period. "We are planning to launch a few projects over coming quarters and this is likely to boost our operational targets," Aggarwal had said. In 2023-24, Signature Global achieved sales bookings of Rs 7,270 crore. The company has set a sales bookings target of Rs 10,000 crore for this fiscal. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Iconic BSA Motorcycles set to return to India

PUNE, 10 AUG

With its new generation Gold Star, BSA Motorcycles, a legendary British brand, is poised to enter India and reclaim its glory in the contemporary era.

Tapping into this desire for the days gone by, Classic Legends has revived a number of brands from yesteryear, reimagining some of their most iconic hits for the modern age. Beyond mere transportation, these brands represent a lifestyle choice. They appeal to riders who value heritage, craftsmanship, and the thrill of the open road.

Hallowed British and European motorcycle marques are enjoying something of a revival in India, as Indian ownership and an increasing appetite for the retro-cool lifestyle breathe new life into them. Several iconic names, from Jawa, originating in the Czech Republic, to the legendary Yezdi brand under Jawa ownership, are making significant strides in the Indian motorcycle market among avid bike enthusiasts. Now, joining this resurgence is another legendary nameplate set to make its mark—the BSA Gold Star.

—PTI

DIVERSIFY ETHANOL PRODUCTION: SHAH URGES SUGAR MILLS

NEW DELHI, 10 AUG

Cooperation Minister Amit Shah on Saturday called on sugar mills to explore alternatives to sugarcane for ethanol production, pushing for a multi-dimensional approach to biofuel manufacturing.

Speaking at an event organized by the National Federation of Cooperative Sugar Factories (NFCSF), Shah said India would achieve its 20 per cent ethanol blending target by 2025-26, ahead of the original 2030 deadline.

The minister highlighted that the government's ethanol blending programme has helped reduce the country's crude oil import bill and address environmental concerns.

PHOTO: FREEPIK

"You need to be futuristic and look at opportunities and expand. Ethanol can be made from multiple sources," Shah said, urging cooperative sugar mills to shed their "orthodox" approach and explore alternative feedstocks such as maize and bamboo. "We have a habit of working inefficiently and seeking help from the government.

The government will be willing to help more if you work efficiently. ....Make a dynamic Federation, not a demand-driven Federation," he added. Shah said about 1,000 crore litres of ethanol is required for blending, and the necessary infrastructure to achieve this target is in place.

He emphasised the need for sugar mills to modernise and adopt new technologies, citing potential export opportunities once the Global Biofuels Alliance is established.

Shah also advised NFCSF to hire professionals to guide loss-making cooperatives and set a target of increasing mills' annual turnover by 25 per cent in two years. *—PTI*

LUNG CANCER

Ex-YouTube CEO Wojcicki dies at 56

WASHINGTON, 10 AUG

Former Youtube chief executive officer and long-time Google executive Susan Wojcicki has died at age 56, according to her husband.

"My beloved wife of 26 years and mother to our five children left us today after 2 years of living with non small cell lung cancer," Dennis Troper said in a social media post late Friday. "Susan was not just my best friend and partner in life, but a brilliant mind, a loving mother, and a dear friend to many," Troper said.

YouTube CEO, Neal Mohan, wrote of his predecessor at the company on X, "Today we @youtube lost a teammate, mentor, and friend, @SusanWojcicki. I had the good fortune of meeting Susan 17 years ago when she was the architect of the DoubleClick acquisition. Her legacy lives on in everything she touched @google and @youtube."

Wojcicki, one of the most prominent women in tech, stepped down from her role at YouTube in 2023, a position she held for nine years, saying she wanted to "start a new chapter focused on my family, health and personal projects I'm passionate about".

"It would be one of the best decisions of my life," Wojcicki wrote when she announced her departure. She was previously a senior vice-president for ad products at Google and became CEO of YouTube in 2014. Before Google, Wojcicki worked at Intel and Bain & Company. *—AP with agencies*

Susan Wojcicki

PHOTO: X / @SUSANWOJCICKI

> **Unbelievably saddened by the loss of my dear friend Susan Wojcicki after two years of living with cancer. She is as core to the history of Google as anyone, and it's hard to imagine the world without her.**
>
> -Sundar Pichai, Google Chief Executive

IPO market witnesses resurgence in 2024

NEW DELHI, 10 AUG

India's Initial Public Offering (IPO) market witnessed a resurgence in 2024, with a total of 272 companies going public compared to 164 during the previous fiscal year, highlights a report by SEBI.

The market regulator SEBI stated that upbeat secondary markets, enthusiasm from retail investors, and strong institutional flows set the stage for a flurry of new listings. "After a relative moderation during 2022-23, the equity segment witnessed a resurgence in fundraising activity during the current fiscal. The IPO market had been vibrant with a total of 272 companies going public as compared to 164 during the last fiscal year," said SEBI.

PHOTO: PTI

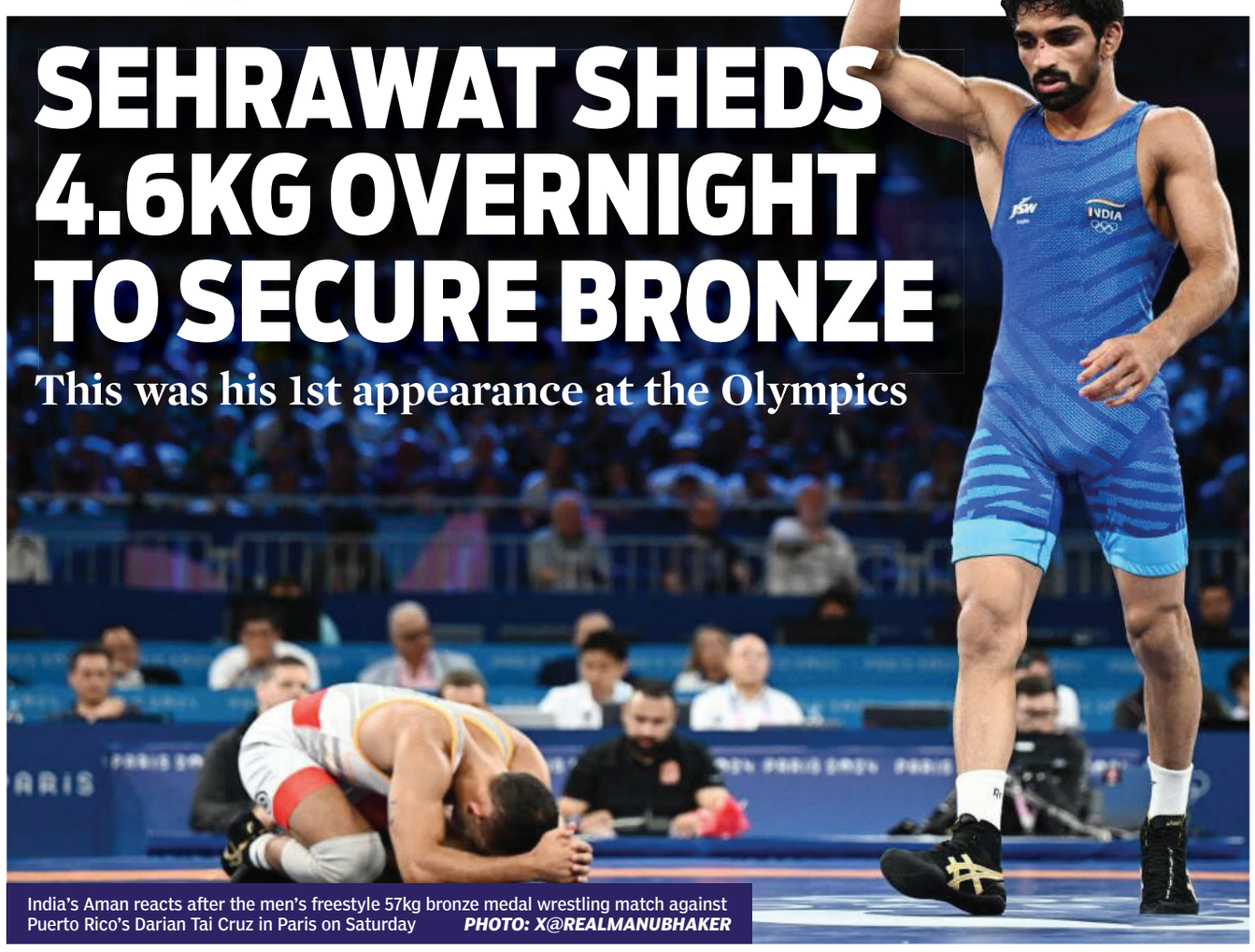
The report also noted that India received the highest foreign investment in the year 2023-24, as the investment surged to a new high of Rs 3.4 lakh crore. It also added that the investment in the year 2023-24 is the highest since the year 1992-93. "Compared to net outflows of Rs 40,936 crore in 2022-23, FPIs invested Rs 3.4 lakh crore in India during 2023-24, which was the highest since 1992-93," said SEBI. *—ANII*

MEDAL TALLY

COUNTRIES				
1. China	37	27	24	88
2. US	33	41	39	113
3. Aus	18	17	14	49
4. Japan	16	10	13	39
69. India	0	1	5	6

SEHRAWAT SHEDS 4.6KG OVERNIGHT TO SECURE BRONZE

This was his 1st appearance at the Olympics



India's Aman reacts after the men's freestyle 57kg bronze medal wrestling match against Puerto Rico's Darian Tai Cruz in Paris on Saturday **PHOTO: X@REALMANUBHAKER**

PARIS, 10 AUG

To gain something, Aman Sehrawat firstly needed to lose something.

When the scales of the weighing machine showed 61.5 kg on Thursday after his semi-final defeat to eventual champion Rei Higuchi, Aman had a bigger job at hand before taking the mat for the bronze medal play-off.

India's youngest Olympic bronze medal winning grappler had to shed 4.5 kilograms of bodyweight in a stipulated time of 10 hours before mandatory second day weigh-in to qualify for the 57 kg bout.

By the time Aman was up on the weighing machine on second morning, he along with his coaches Jagmander Singh and Virender Dahiya had accomplished the mission -- reduced 4.6 kgs to be eligible for the fight at 56.9 kg.

It was case being exactly 100 gram less than critical limit. If 100 gram became tragedy for Vinesh Phogat, it was a case of relief for Aman.

On Thursday, Aman had lost his semifinal bout against Japan's Rei Higuchi around 6:30 pm. There was no time to waste. The 'mission' began with a one-and-a-half-hour mat session during which the two senior coaches engaged him in standing wrestling and it was followed by a one-hour hot-bath session.

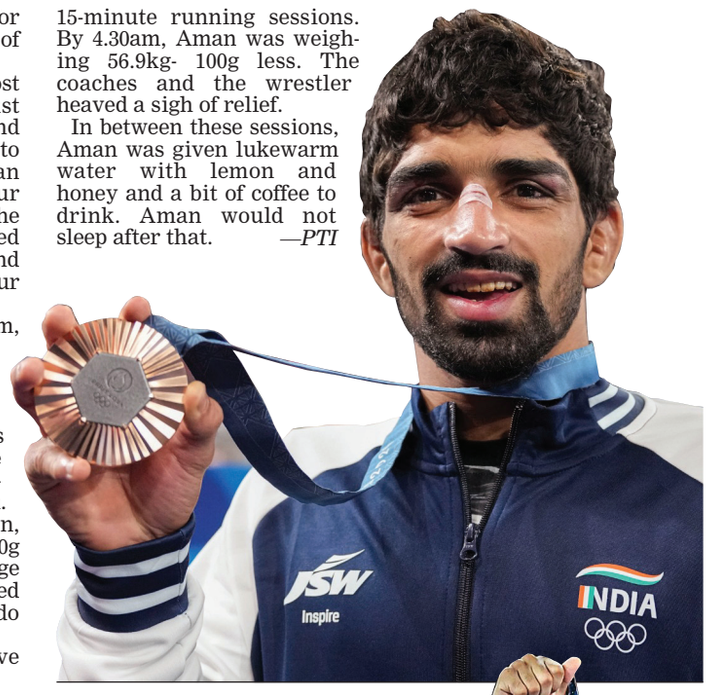
At 12.30 they hit the gym, where Aman had a non-stop one-hour run on the treadmill.

The sweating would help in cutting weight. He was then given a 30-minute break, followed by five sessions of 5-minute sauna bath.

By the end of the last session, Aman was still weighing 900g more. He was given a massage and then the coaches asked the Chhtrasal trainee to do light jogging.

It was followed by five 15-minute running sessions. By 4.30am, Aman was weighing 56.9kg- 100g less. The coaches and the wrestler heaved a sigh of relief.

In between these sessions, Aman was given lukewarm water with lemon and honey and a bit of coffee to drink. Aman would not sleep after that. *—PTI*



Neeraj Chopra, Nadeem look to popularise javelin

PARIS, 10 AUG

With their "healthy competition" on the field and "strong friendship" off it, javelin superstars Neeraj Chopra and Arshad Nadeem have set out to fulfil their common mission of inspiring youngsters of India and Pakistan and getting them hooked on the sport.

Nadeem won the men's javelin gold in the ongoing Olympics with a stunning 92.97m throw -- which was also an Olympic record -- while Chopra, who was defending his title, took the silver with a season's best effort of 89.45m.

"It's already grown a lot. We're already seeing more talented javelin throwers in India. The same is happening in Pakistan," Chopra said when asked whether their success will lead to a boom in athletics in both India and Pakistan. He was referring to last year's Asian Games in Hangzhou, China, where he had won a gold. Asked whether the India-Pakistan rivalry will switch from cricket to javelin, Chopra said, "That'll be possible if we had more competitions like in cricket. We have two major competitions: the Olympics every four years and the World Championships every two years.

"If we had more competitions, more people would watch, like the Diamond League and some others," said the 26-year-old from Khandra village near Panipat.

The 27-year-old Nadeem also spoke about the significance of Pakistan and India winning gold and silver in Paris Olympics. "Our friendship is really strong, and I wish it continues for a long time."

—PTI

Ethiopian runner Tola wins men's marathon, ends Kenya dominance

PARIS, 10 AUG

Ethiopian runner Tamirat Tola won the men's marathon at the Paris Olympics to end Kenya's dominance of the race.

Tola finished in an Olympic record time of 2 hours, 6 minutes, 26 seconds, with Belgium's Bashir Abdi finishing 21 seconds behind and Benson Kipruto taking bronze for Kenya, 34 seconds back. Tola looked back as he neared the line and had time to soak up the applause.

Two-time defending champion Eliud Kipchoge struggled throughout was more than eight minutes behind Tola. The last non-Kenyan to win was Ugandan Stephen Kiprotich at the London Games in 2012. *—AP*

Ethiopia's Tamirat Tola celebrates after crossing the finish line at the end of the men's marathon on Saturday **PHOTO: PTI**

Khelif beats Liu to win boxing Gold

Imane Khelif beat Yang Liu of China 5:0 in the final **PHOTO: PTI**

PARIS, 10 AUG

Algerian boxer Imane Khelif has won a gold medal Friday at the Paris Olympics, emerging a champion from a tumultuous run at the Games where she endured intense scrutiny in the ring and online abuse from around the world over misconceptions about her womanhood.

Khelif beat Yang Liu of China 5:0 in the final of the women's welterweight division, wrapping up the best series of fights of her boxing career with a victory at Roland Garros, where crowds chanted her name, waved Algerian flags and roared every time she landed a punch.

After her unanimous win, Khelif jumped into her coaches' arms, one of them putting her on his shoulders and carrying her in a victory lap as she pumped her fists and grabbed an Algerian flag from the crowd.

"For eight years, this has been my dream, and I'm now the Olympic champion and gold medalist," Khelif said through an interpreter. Asked about the scrutiny, she told reporters: "That also gives my success a special taste because of those attacks."

The gold medal fight was the culmination of Khelif's nine-day run through an Olympic tournament that began bizarrely. *—AP*

AT DELHI AIRPORT

INDIAN HOCKEY TEAM RECEIVE WARM WELCOME

Paris Olympic Bronze medalist Indian Hockey players pose for photos, at Major Dhyan Chand National Stadium in New Delhi **PHOTO: PTI**

NEW DELHI, 10 AUG

Hunreds of fans lined up to garland and cheer for them as members of the Indian men's hockey team, including captain Harmanpreet Singh, touched down in the national capital on Saturday after fetching a second successive Olympic bronze medal in Paris.

The Indian team extended its record overall Olympic medal haul in the sport to 13 with a 2-1 victory over Spain in the third place match in Paris.

However, not all members of the winning team made their way back home as a few vital cogs remained in the French capital for the closing ceremony on Sunday.

Celebrated goalkeeper PR Sreejesh, who retired at the end of India's campaign, is the joint flag-bearer for the ceremony along with double-medallist Manu Bhaker. He remained in Paris along with Amit Rohidas, Raj Kumar Pal, Abhishek, Sukhjeet Singh and Sanjay. This batch is slated to return after the closing ceremony.

Harmanpreet and team members were greeted with garlands and celebratory dhol as they made their way out of the arrivals at the Indira Gandhi International airport in the morning.

"We have received all the support, and all our requirements were fulfilled. I really want to thank... We are very happy and proud," Harmanpreet, who scored a brace in the medal match, told the media on his arrival.

"It is a big achievement for hockey. The love that is being showered upon hockey doubles our responsibility. We will also try that whenever we enter the field, we comeback with a medal," he said. *—PTI*

> **Sreejesh is the best person, a legend, and India calls him the 'Great Wall', amazing, that is all I can say he played his best hockey, and he has contributed to the country by playing hockey, and the standard he has set as a goalkeeper, it will inspire the next generation**
>
> —Lalit Upadhyay, Indian Hockey Forward

Wrestler Hooda loses in 76kg Quarterfinals

PARIS, 10 AUG

Indian wrestler Reetika Hooda put up a stout defence against top seed Aiperi Medet Kyzy before losing the women's 76kg quarterfinal bout, which turned into an intense power struggle at the Paris Olympics here on Saturday.

Up against the Asian Games champion and World Championship silver medallist, Reetika managed to restrict her formidable rival to standing wrestling but eventually lost the bout on criteria after it ended 1-1. If the two wrestlers end with the same score, the one who scores the last point is declared winner.

The 21-year old Reetika had become India's female U23 world champion last year. A little more experience of battling quality senior wrestlers would have helped her get an upset win. "You can't win bouts by just defence," India coach Virender Dahiya fumed.

"Yes, she fought well but what's the point if your strong defence does not get you win. Reetika did not let her attack but she herself did not attack. You lose by one point, or 10 points, you lose. Reetika could have won this bout," he said. *—PTI*

Reetika Hooda loses to Aiperi Medet Kyzy in quarterfinal **PHOTO: PTI**

PHOTO: DURAND CUP

Shillong Lajong beat Rangdajied 2-0 in Durand Cup

SHILLONG, 10 AUG

Goals from Ronney Willson and Kenstar Kharshong powered Shillong Lajong FC to a 2-0 win over Rangdajied United FC in the Durand Cup here on Saturday. With this win, Shillong Lajong leaped to the top of the table with six points, same as FC Goa but on goal difference. Shillong Lajong took the lead midway through the first half. Rangdajied failed to clear a free-kick and it was recycled from the left wing by Kharshong who found Willson free at the back post and the defender planted his header past everyone into the goal. *—PTI*

BCB seeks army's help for hosting women's T20 WC

DHAKA, 10 AUG

The Bangladesh Cricket Board has sought security assurance from the country's army chief for conducting the women's T20 World Cup, scheduled to be held in 3-20 October amid political unrest in the country following ouster of former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. The women's T20 World Cup is slated to be held in two Bangladesh cities ---- Sylhet and Mirpur. BCB has written to Bangladesh's army chief of staff General Waker-Uz-Zaman seeking security assurance for organising the tournament. *—PTI*

বাংলাদেশ
Bangladesh Cricket Board

PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA

ROW ERUPTS

Refugee breaker disqualified for wearing 'Free Afghan Women' cape

PARIS, 10 AUG

Refugee breaker Manizha Talash, or "b-girl Talash," was disqualified from the first-ever Olympic breaking competition on Friday, after she wore a cape that said "Free Afghan Women" during her pre-qualifier battle against India Sardjoe — known as "b-girl India."

The 21-year-old, originally from Afghanistan and representing the Olympic Refugee, team lost in the pre-qualifier battle against Sardjoe, and would not have advanced even if she hadn't been disqualified.

Political statements and slogans are banned on the field of play and on podiums at the Olympics. World DanceSport Federation, the governing body for breaking at the Olympics, issued a statement. Talash sought asylum in Spain after fleeing Taliban rule in her home country in 2021. "I'm here because I want to reach my dream.

The one-off pre-qualifier battle between Talash and Sardjoe was added in May, when Talash was included in the Olympic roster after the b-girl from Afghanistan missed registration for qualifying events. The International Olympic Committee's executive board invited her to participate after learning of her efforts to defy the strict rule of the Taliban in her home country. *—AP*

Refugee Team's Manizha Talash **PHOTO: PTI**

Cringy moves raise questions about break dancing contest

PARIS, 10 AUG

From the Australian b-girl with the meme-worthy "kangaroo" dance move to the silver-medal winning Lithuanian in a durag, breaking's Olympic debut had a few moments that raised questions from viewers about whether the essence of the hip-hop art form was captured at the Paris Games.

Rachael Gunn, 36, a PhD holder, from Australia achieved internet fame, but not necessarily for Olympic-level skill. Competing against some b-girls half her age, she was swept out of the round-robin stage without earning a single point, and her unconventional moves landed flat while failing to match the skill level of her foes. In one move while laying on her side, she reached for her toes, flipped over and did it again in a move dubbed "the kangaroo."

"I was never going to beat these girls on what they do best — their power moves. What I bring is creativity," said Gunn.

PHOTO: X/@MATTYHUSS

Many Black viewers, in particular, called out Lithuania's silver medalist b-girl Nicka, (legally named Dominika Banevic) for donning a durag during each of her battles.

Durags, once worn by enslaved Africans to tie up their hair for work, are still worn by Black people to protect and style their hair. They became a fashionable symbol of Black pride in between1960 and 2000. But when worn by those who aren't Black, durags can be seen as cultural appropriation. Banevic is white. *—AP*